

# HOW TO LIVE AT THE FRONT

TIPS FOR AMERICAN SOLDIERS

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HECTOR MACQUARRIE, B.A. CANTAB.

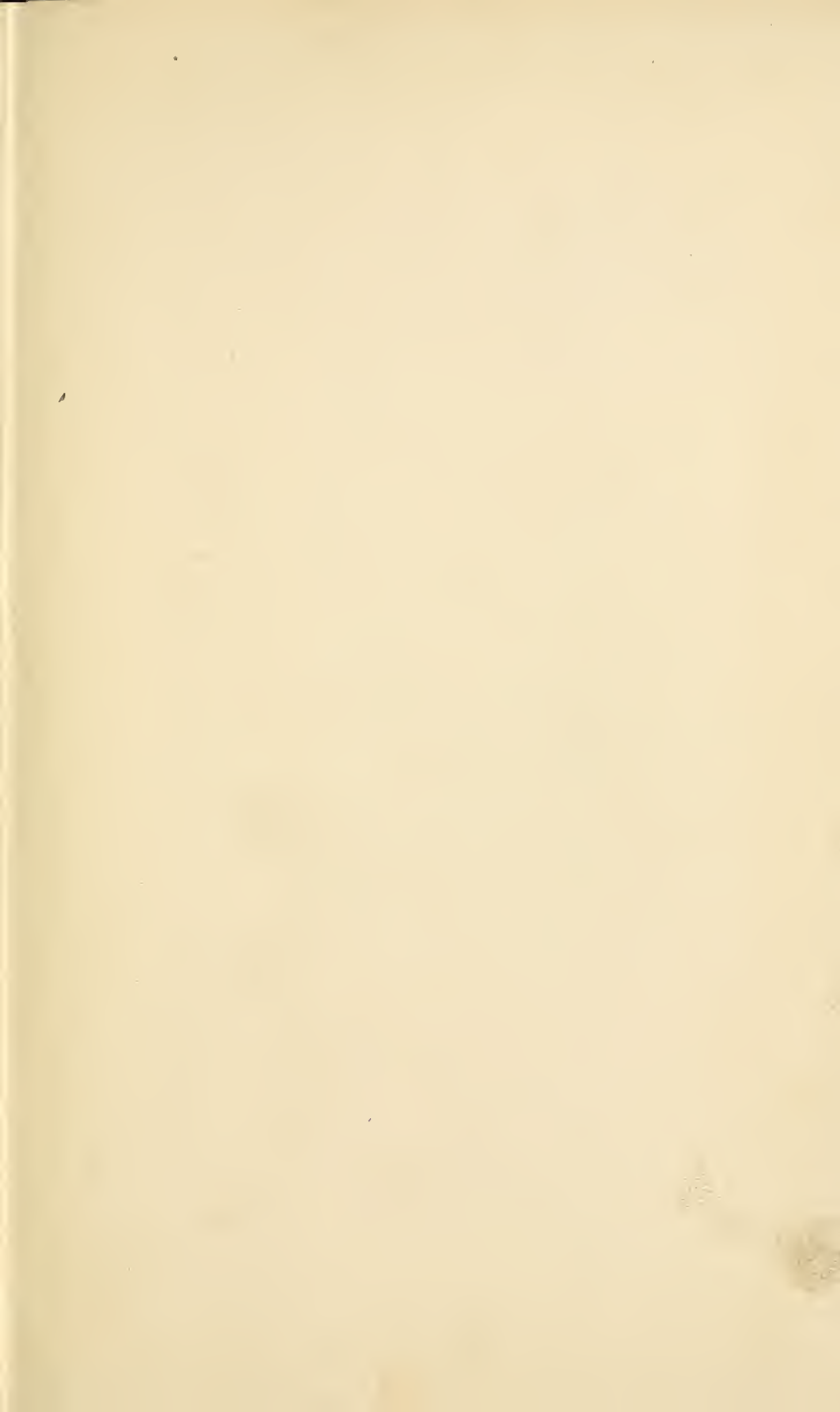


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**HOW TO LIVE  
AT THE FRONT**  
**TIPS FOR AMERICAN SOLDIERS**







SIX DAYS' LEAVE

By R. TAIT MCKENZIE

A Seaforth Highlander, in full field equipment—with a German helmet  
as a trophy—going home on leave. He'll enjoy it!

# ✓ HOW TO LIVE AT THE FRONT

TIPS FOR AMERICAN SOLDIERS

BY

HECTOR MACQUARRIE, B.A. CANTAB.

SECOND LIEUTENANT, ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY

12 FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS ✓



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IN MEMORY OF  
DOROTHY H. P. HUMPHERY





## PREFACE

DURING my stay in America I have been asked many questions about things at the front. In spite of the valiant efforts of newspaper men the impression still prevails that the present war is a continuous battle of Gettysburg. People have often said to me, "But you haven't actually been in the front line trench, not in the very front." They cannot appreciate the fact that when a nation is in arms abnormal conditions, although they prevail, cannot be appreciated for any length of time by ordinary people. It seems to them impossible for a person to exist for many days in a fire trench without being killed or going insane. Human nature fortunately is very adaptable and one sometimes spends some very amusing and interesting hours in the actual trenches

perhaps only one hundred yards from the Germans.

Generally it is a small percentage of the men in an army who are actually grappling with the enemy. Hence a large percentage of one's life at the front is spent under similar conditions to those prevailing in a military practice camp. Perhaps conditions will change.

I have had the honor of addressing young officers and men here preparing for active service, and have followed informal lines, giving straight tips about the things that struck me more forcibly in training and at the front. In this book I have followed similar lines. This and the fact of my having to work under pressure in the preparation of the manuscript will explain its informal treatment.

When you go to France you will enter upon new experiences with the Poilus, the Tommies, acquaintances behind the lines, with the enemy and, last but not least, with

yourself. In that life there will be a great deal which is not found in the official military text-books or presented in the pictorial or literary accounts of staff reporters.

I want to point out to you the little things in warfare—the ordinary personal things, the things that are not a bit thrilling or exciting. In the process I hope to show you how to avoid making other people, as well as yourself, suffer; the other people may be your comrades, your family or your nation. Your life will not be made up of attacking the Germans or resisting their attack—although there will be a deal of both—for the greater part your life will be one of personal relations under peculiar conditions, upon a strange stage.

It has many times been said that America will profit by England's mistakes—no one hopes that more than do I—I also hope that the American soldier who reads this book will profit to the degree of

recognizing that the good and bad of the war will largely depend upon the effect that fighting has upon the individual soldier, and that that effect, for good or bad, lies under the control of the individual. This book, giving you an acquaintance with the conditions that you will encounter, may make you a more valuable soldier, one better able to look out for his body and his soul (both are in danger at the front). If it has this result I will be thankful.

H. MACQ.

July 20, 1917.

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# HOW TO LIVE AT THE FRONT

## TIPS FOR AMERICAN SOLDIERS

### CHAPTER I

#### AT THE BARRIER

THERE are many men in America to-day who expect to be called out at any time for service. Never in their lives before have they regarded soldiering seriously. Possibly a large number do not know the difference between Artillery and Infantry. Now obviously some men are suited for one branch of the Service, and some are suited for another. It is a good idea to think this out. Possibly you may have little to say in the matter and will be sent wherever the man in charge wants you to go. Still there may be a certain amount that you can do yourself in regard to get-

ting into that particular arm of the Service which seems most suitable.

There will be a lot of men called out who loathe the very idea of shouldering a rifle. Civilization and its many drawbacks have made physical cowards of many of us. Centuries ago a man had to be able to fight. He was brought up to the idea of defending his country and his women folk. If he were a strong, husky fellow he survived; if a weakling, he was invariably killed off. Nowadays we do not kill anybody off; unlike the rest of the natural world, with us it is not a case of the survival of the fittest. Quite unfit people can be seen everywhere. Go into the lounge of a fashionable hotel in New York or Philadelphia, or better still, go into a restaurant about 1 A.M. in the morning and you will see plenty of extremely unfit people.

In England there were masses of them. They do not exist now. At heart the great

majority were really decent fellows, but civilization has had an evil effect. They enlisted by the score. Unfortunately for themselves they were morally brave, but physically cowardly. For years many of them had been using the capital of their power of resistance instead of the interest. Instead of spending the day out in the sunshine, most of their existence was spent under the electric light. Many of these men took drugs in order to keep up their spirits. When they found themselves at the front, their position was extremely cruel. A strong man finds an intensive bombardment pretty awful; a weak man cannot stand it at all.

There are also lots of men who have led ordinary lives, but who are what is termed "temperamental." You know the sort of chap. Now if you regard yourself as one of these men, choose an arm of the Service where you will not be too much exposed. Present your case to the doctor

who examines you. He may not sympathize very much, but see what you can do. If all your efforts fail and you find yourself in the Infantry, stick it out. It will not be so very bad. In any case make a point of looking after your physical health as much as possible. Endeavor to develop your body, even at the expense of your mind. Your mind will not be of very much use; indeed, it may leave you altogether during an intensive bombardment. If you are the kind of person who is wildly thrilled by Wagner; if you are passionately fond of insects, bugs, and things like that; if you feel sentimental when looking at a sunset; or if you are conscious of the fact that you fox-trot better than anyone else, you seem to be suspiciously temperamental—so look out and do not join the flying corps. Choose something more suitable. Be a driver in the Artillery. It is dirty work in the winter, but

on most occasions you will be free from much that is nerve-racking and trying.

Unfortunately, when a country is at war there are always a number of parasites going about. A certain type is particularly deadly when preying upon either the temperamental or the intemperamental soldier. Stout ladies averaging the age of 35 and 40, in a subtle kind of way, while expressing much sympathy for your hard lot as a soldier, will let you know that they can supply you with some tablets or powders that will keep you up during times of danger. Avoid them like the plague. If you can be the means of bringing one to justice, and you will probably shrink from doing this because she seems such a sporting old girl and imbued with so much sympathy for you, you will be doing more than killing 20 Germans. Perhaps your parasite will take the form of a fat man with an expansive shirt front and a large ring on his finger. He will

possess a large cheery face. You have often seen him near the ring at a prize fight. He will have a good working knowledge of man in general and is consequently dangerous. There are other types of parasites about whom it is unnecessary that I should warn you.

The average kind of man with a good healthy body will not find warfare so very trying. Some indeed rather like it. There are many men who with the greatest of enthusiasm join up right from the start. They feel that they must fight for their country, but just at the back of their minds there is a feeling that the whole thing is going to be awful. They will feel this mostly at night time before they go to sleep. Horrible visions of Germans coming at them with bayonets will harass their minds. The next day this will pass. Now the greatest sympathy is felt towards this type of man. He wants very badly to prove himself a brave and effi-

cient soldier. I can only once more advise him to stick to the development of his body at the expense of his mind. At all costs, he must avoid the dope supplied by the lady of 40 or the fat sporting man. You know there are occasions when warfare is too terrible for words. It requires all one's power of resistance. Stick to your guns, try your very hardest to remain calm, and all will probably be well.



## CHAPTER II

### FITTING INTO THE MACHINE

ONCE upon a time there was a large firm of merchants whose chief business was the production of mechanical toys. Some of the toys were quite clever and a good deal of mechanical skill was needed in their manufacture. The country in which they lived was very rich and some of the fathers bought quite expensive toys for their children, such as small automobiles, also small locomotives that would run under steam. Unfortunately the country had a big crisis in its history and the fathers refused to buy expensive toys any longer and things began to look very black for the merchants.

One member of the firm had spent his apprenticeship in the manufacture of engines for big liners. This member sug-



gested that all the available capital should be put into a big plant for the manufacture of engines for ships. It was a bold step, but it had to be taken. The apparently impossible often occurs in life.

The merchants were fortunate in obtaining an order for the engines of a large liner. They received the drawings, but only the fellow who had spent his youth in the engine plant could understand them. He worked very hard and the others helped to the best of their ability. Finally the drawings were understood and the raw material ordered. The work was tremendous. It was difficult to get experienced foremen pattern-makers, but they had to take what they could get and hope for the best. The foundry presented many difficulties, but some good men were obtained. The forge also had to be supplied, but the time was short, and if anything was to be done it had to be done quickly. They got plenty of raw material and there

were masses of it. It arrived in truck loads every day and as the head of the firm saw it coming in he wondered how on earth he was going to turn all that stuff into a perfect engine that would cause the liner to rush across the sea. He was discouraged but had to stick to it.

After a time the raw material was turned into rough forgings and castings. This had been difficult, but after many failures a good many parts arrived at the machine shops. Here the difficulties were very great. First the lower foremen did not know their men very well. The machines were badly placed in the shop. Many of the foremen had to be dismissed. The roof started to leak during the winter. The department ordering lubricating oil occasionally failed. The men on the lathes and millers ruined a large amount of the work. Muddle and worry were everywhere. Still they had to go on or else ruin would stare the firm in the face. After

months of worry and trouble at last the great engine showed signs of being what it was meant to be. Finally it was erected in the ship, and as the head of the firm sat at luncheon on the liner during her trial trip he wondered how on earth he could have got the job done at all. The engine was not a very good one at first, but the material was good, and after several alterations and repairs and several trips across the ocean it got tuned up and the firm received many orders for other ships.

If any of you know anything about the manufacture of machinery and large-scale machine-shop practice you will promptly discredit my fable. Perhaps you will be right to do so, but you will admit the possibility of such a thing happening.

Great Britain and America are the firm of merchants. The large engine for the ship is their new armies.

Now you fellows represent the raw material. The underforemen represent the

N.C.O.'s, the head foremen represent the officers; the member of the firm who had spent his time with the experienced firm of engineers is your regular army.

Your preliminary training will have been faulty for certain. If every member of your new army were a genius their very inexperience would cause certain mistakes. The fact that all you American men have had good educations is an advantage and a little disadvantageous. You have very healthy, strong bodies and will be able to stand intensive training.

Many of you have not as yet been called up so I will give you a few tips that you may be able to see a glimmer of light.

You know that it is during one's training that one can pick up the little things that are going to be useful. Some of you already in the Service may have missed a great deal during the months that have passed. Perhaps these remarks will refresh your memory.

In England when a man joins the army in peace time, he is sent to a depot and most of the rough spots are removed from him before he joins his regiment. He is taught the elements of soldiering. When he arrives at his station or post he finds himself with a few others in the recruit class. It is not very difficult for him. If he is a decent sort of chap, the older soldiers are willing to help. Being one of a few recruits, he is very much in the minority. He has to put up with a good deal of what we call in England "Ragging." It really does him a lot of good and after a year he is on the way towards being something of a soldier. Possibly the same thing occurs in the army of Uncle Sam.

When the war broke out, there was nothing approaching a continental army in England. There were about 200,000 regulars. There is now an army, it is said, of about five million. This means that to every twenty-five untrained soldiers there

was one trained one, and the same proportion applies to officers. To train effectively and rapidly the present British army we really needed the whole of our regular army, and that might not have been enough. Of course, they had to go to France, so the training of our first couple of hundred thousand was left mainly in the hands of elderly officers, N.C.O.'s, a few old reservists, and a sprinkling of regulars. In time, men were wounded at the front and they returned, some of them to light duty, training men; but as soon as possible they were sent back to France.

The actual firing of a gun, the actual killing of the enemy is but one part of warfare. Everything else leads up to it and that everything summed up in the words "effective organization" is most important. The supply of food requires the service of many thousands of men, at the head of whom are capable administra-

tors with large staffs. Each man gets a certain ration every day; imagine what would happen if one hundredth part of the ration was not supplied. Ammunition, horse fodder, clothing, telephone material are but a few of the commodities which have to be brought up at the right moment. The trouble caused by not having a new pair of shoes the moment the sole is worn out gives you an inkling of the tremendous machine working behind a large army. It takes experience to get it going, no matter how clever the men in charge may be. In the English army to-day it works as it should, but it has now had experience—paid for dearly.

You will notice when you get to the front, and rather before you get to the trenches, that there are thousands of soldiers who never kill a single German. A very large percentage have never seen one alive or free.

At the beginning of the war in England,



when a couple of hundred thousand men were called up there was bound to be a certain amount of disorganization, and the man who suffered most was the private of inexperience. He understands now. At first he did not and got a bit annoyed.

Now in America things are just a little similar. You seem to be going to have in a comparatively short time a huge army. The work of the Quartermaster's staff will be tremendous. His staff officers will be a little inexperienced and it may be that you will be the man who suffers. Perhaps as you have British mistakes to learn from, everything will work like a book right from the start. It seems that Great Britain did not do so badly, considering all things. She did her very best, as you will.

In any case the organization of a huge army consisting of a million men requires the utmost efficiency, and when an army is really a mushroom growth, this efficiency is difficult to come by. It *will* come all



right, but it will take a little time. An army organization is like a vast machine in which every pinion must do its part correctly or else the use of the machine will be impaired. Pinions take some fitting and machining. Possibly one or two of the pinions in your machine will have to be repaired or replaced.

The time will come when you will be ordered to report at a certain place, and finally you will find yourself at the railway station saying "Good-bye" to your friends and relatives. You will feel a bit of a hero. Make the most of it, for except when visiting your home you'll never feel a hero again until you return for good. In the train you will find many others going to the same post or camp with you. You will get enthusiastic and doubtless, as the train passes through the country, people will cheer you, and you will all sing some song or other. I wonder what the song will be? "Tipperary" got so stale

in England that if you now sing it to a British Tommy he feels faint. It may indeed happen that the train will be delayed on the journey perhaps for hours. Meal-time will arrive, but there will be no food. The people looking after supplies did not expect the train to be delayed; therefore, take some food with you and something to drink. The water on the train may get used up. You will be told that on your arrival at the camp or post you will be supplied with towels, etc., and uniform. Don't be surprised if you have to wait many days, many weeks for both towel and uniform; therefore, if you can take a thin extra shirt with you and a towel, do so. Many recruits in England had to dry themselves on pocket handkerchiefs for weeks. They were easy to wash but to dry them was difficult. People have a habit of pinching things in the army. Don't forget to take two tooth brushes with you. People even pinch



A HALT ON THE ROAD TO THE TRENCHES

Such halts are sometimes necessary and useful, but too often needless and a waste of time and energy



these for some reason or other, possibly to clean buttons with. When you arrive at the post it may be late at night, but you will find that as soon as possible they will get some food for you. Don't be surprised if you don't get any milk in your coffee. There may be no butter. The food may be rough, but it will be clean. That night you will get a good meal. The next day you will have to look after yourself. Things will seem a bit horrible to you. There will be a long line of other rookies waiting for food. If you can be near the top of the line, be there. If you are at the end, it may be that the food will have run out and you'll get none. This will be owing to the inexperience of the man dishing out the food. He'll soon learn; so will you. However, when you are left you will go to the Y.M.C.A. or the Regimental canteen and buy a tin of sardines. They are safer than tinned lobster or salmon. You will get some rather weak coffee, but even

here at the canteen the food may run out. Expect all these things. They can't be helped at first. In a day or two all will be well and soon the food problem will be solved.

You may find at the beginning that parades are very short. There will be a shortage of officers and N.C.O.'s. Some fellows will find that it is easy to avoid parades. They'll get caught in the end. If you are a mounted soldier in the Gunners or the Cavalry, you will be ordered to attend stables at a certain hour. There will be about six men to every horse, and you will find that the stable hour will drag. You will get blazes if you are caught doing nothing. So do something. Once more, some fellows will avoid stables. They also will get nipped in time.

You will at first find that discipline is a little lax in spots. Sometimes, and when you least expect it, it will be very severe. There will be a good deal of time on your



hands, but don't be deceived by this, it will change. To sum up, take all things as they come. If you can keep cheerful, do so. Expect many discomforts and don't be surprised if you detect what you may regard as inefficiency.

Like you, many of your officers will be inexperienced. They will do their very best. In the same way that you will find it difficult to march correctly, to understand certain commands, to handle your rifle correctly, so they will find it difficult to look after you. You know that to look after you is an officer's duty—to see that your clothing is in good condition, to see that you are well fed and that the food is good and well cooked, even to see that your bed is comfortable, and most of all, to see that you are happy and contented. The most important lesson an officer has to learn is not to use his sword well, not to be able to give correct commands and to know at once when they are not being obeyed cor-

rectly, not to be able to look like a peacock and salute his superiors; but to be able to understand you, to be able to look after you so well that you will respect him and be willing to die for him if necessary. It will take him a little time to learn this, but he *will* learn it. If he makes mistakes, try and put up with them cheerfully. He is doing his best and all the time he is getting blazes from his superiors—you don't hear it, or you ought not to.

At first you will be only a part of a crude machine, of which the bearings will want much oil. Through patient work the machine will get tuned up. When you first arrive you will find a number of non-commissioned officers, sergeants, corporals, and the like—they will possibly be old soldiers with a sprinkling from the regular army. Look out for the old soldiers. They are either very crusty or very affable. The affable ones are of little use to you. The regular army men are the fel-



lows from whom you can learn most. You will find them very neat and tidy. Look at their clothing, it will be very clean. Their shoes will be polished in a wonderful way; their hats will be clean and neat. You will note how they hold themselves. Try and copy them.

From your ranks will be chosen a large number of N.C.O.'s. If you look a smart fellow, you will be chosen and you will rather enjoy the honor. You will write home about it, and your mother will tell her friends, and your father will be proud. Now be careful. An N.C.O. is NOT a person who merely gives orders to his men. He is placed in the position to get certain results. He may be a handsome fellow with fine shoulders and a commanding sort of way with him, but if he is not a man of character he is perfectly useless. The issuing of commands is nothing if they are not obeyed. Now you will find that with a little study the commands and

manœuvres can be learned. You will be able to put the men through their drill without much difficulty. That is all easy. But if one of the men under you does something wrong, forgets something that you have told him to do, *he* is not going to be blamed; but you are. You will find yourself, to your astonishment, getting blazes from your officer through no apparent fault of your own. You had been told to get something done and Private Jones had been duly ordered by you to do the thing. The officer finds it not done. He gives you blazes, you reply that you had ordered Private Jones to do it. To your amazement the officer only gets more annoyed. Do you follow me? If you are told to do a thing, it must be done and you must be man enough to see that it *is* done. The fact that Private Jones forgot is *your* fault. If he had respected you at all he would have done it all right. You will learn in time. Make the men under you

respect you. Don't be afraid of telling them what you think of them. They won't mind.

The issuing of every order has a purpose. It is never done for fun. Quite often its object is the comfort of the many. Soldiers always hate a weak, wobbling N.C.O. They respect one who gets his own way. You can get your own way if you go about it in the right manner. Some N.C.O.'s get it by being brutal. They are fools. They die often.

Let the men know, not by telling them nor by explaining, that you want most of all to do your duty by them. In the same way that an officer merely exists to make his men efficient and effective, so you exist to help him gain the same object. You must think of the happiness of the many. There are thousands of instances that I could quote. In the barrack room a man may make himself unpleasant to the others—sit on him tight. Some N.C.O.'s think

it is a sign of efficiency to be always reporting their men to the officer in charge—it is not. You are a leader of men. A leader of men seldom has to refer to higher authority. Be tactful. Don't ever ask a man to do a thing that you can't do yourself. Don't give commands that can't be thoroughly understood. If possible and convenient, explain the object of your commands.

Some N.C.O.'s are always putting men under arrest. The officer is compelled to bear out anything they may say. It is a matter of discipline. I have often had men brought up to me and after dismissing them with a few rude remarks I have kept the N.C.O. back and have given him much more than I gave the man.

At the beginning there are bound to be many N.C.O.'s who have been unwisely chosen for the job. If you have been chosen and don't feel yourself capable, drop the job at once like a hot cake. It

will be better for yourself and the men. Nevertheless, remember that you are fighting for your country, and you can do more as an N.C.O. than as a private. It will be very difficult. It will become impossible or it ought to be impossible for you to be very intimate with your men. I do not mean that you must cut your friends if they happen to be privates, but it will be a little difficult. This may seem funny, and you may think that it is different in the American army. It will be just the same. In our army to-day all classes are mixed. They are not all serfs. When I was a private my cousin was a lieutenant, and I could not speak to him outside of his room where, however, I occasionally took my revenge.

Warfare is a horrible thing and to-day it has become an unnatural thing, and therefore much that is unpleasant has to be put up with. After a few weeks as an N.C.O. you will notice that your friends

among the privates will be a little different. They will say you are getting "stuck up." They will discourage you a little. Things will become increasingly difficult. You will be getting into trouble with your officers, and when you get to the barrack room instead of friendly glances you may get the opposite. You may be a big man, a man of great character, and will be able to ignore this. You may have played on your school football team or have been something special at baseball, consequently it will be easy. On the other hand, perhaps you may be quite a little man with no reputation to help you. Now don't get discouraged. Stick it out. Insist on the most rigid obedience. You will get it all right if your order has been a sensible one; and never, never give an order that is not clear and defined or that you fear will not be obeyed through misunderstanding. Therefore, think out your

order and having given it insist upon obedience, even if it is a wrong order.

Always take the blame from your officers for the faults of your men. If a man is discovered by you to have committed a serious fault, don't excuse him, it is not your business. For his sake, for the sake of your regiment have the fault punished. The man won't respect you a bit more for letting him off. This will be very hard.

I once found a man asleep on duty as a sentry. It was very cold and miserable, and he, poor fellow, had felt a bit sick and having sat down, fell sound asleep. It was just before dawn and at the front. I turned my electric torch on him, then quickly turned it off. I wanted very badly to go away and fire a brick at him or start talking loudly to the horses near so as to give him a chance. I went over to where the men were sleeping, tired out and weary. We had had a long march. Then



I thought of that sentry whom we all trusted to wake us in case of danger. I wanted to wake him up and to give him blazes, and let him off with that. I went over and looked at him again. I thought of his family and the disgrace that would follow his court-martial. We were at the front, and you know sentries may not sleep at their posts. They are there to look after the men who are sleeping. If they sleep themselves there is no point in having them. Finally I roused him and he told me the sad tale of his feeling ill—yet if he had thought, he had only to mention the fact to the N.C.O. in charge and he would have been relieved. So I placed him under arrest. Thank heaven, he had an epileptic fit before his court-martial, so we both escaped. I told the major afterwards about what I had thought and he said that I had merely my duty to perform, and had had no business even to think.

I remember once, in action at the front



and being on duty as orderly officer, finding a sentry sitting beside the fire in a gun emplacement; I gave him every chance to escape, but he must have been deaf. I knew him to be a very good man and took the responsibility of giving him a good talking to instead of arresting him. I, of course, told the major about it and he agreed that it might work all right. You know officers hate having to punish their men; all they want is efficiency, and if it can be got pleasantly all the better. Unfortunately another officer found the same man doing the same thing a week after.

So you see an N.C.O.'s job is a difficult one and consists really in leading men; not merely in wearing a few stripes. Try and manage your men well. Protect them not by letting them off, that doesn't help them a bit, but by teaching them and making them do their duty. Try not to lose your temper. It is often a good thing to pretend to get very angry when you are

quite calm. As I said before, the issuing of orders is not the most important thing to which an N.C.O. has to attend. However, there is a lot in the issuing of orders. Develop a big, sharp voice. Bring out your orders distinctly and sharply like a bark. You'll get fine results if you do. Feel enthusiastic about your drill. Make it interesting. Think of the men. Let them stand at ease occasionally. If you are instructing and not on parade unbend as much as possible. Make contrasts. Bring out your points: give the explanation softly, but distinctly, and then the order as though you were going to murder every man on the parade ground. They will laugh at you at first, but stick to it. In all walks of life people who start to get results are at times laughed at. When they start to discourage you, you will know that you are doing something worth while. There will be a period, if I am not mistaken, when you will go to your officer and

ask him to relieve you of your stripes. You will feel a bit of a martyr. You are not. You are merely a quitter. You have failed to help your country.

The greatest difficulty we had at the beginning was the training of N.C.O.'s. A man hated having to be hard on his pals. We understood and sympathized, but we had to have N.C.O.'s somehow, so we persevered. The result was that the officers were overburdened. Out of two hundred men in my battery at the beginning, we succeeded in making only one really good N.C.O. He was uneducated and could hardly speak the King's English. He made some fearful mistakes in his commands. It was difficult for both myself and my men to keep from laughing at him. I remember before he was promoted, he was on sentry duty and I was Orderly Officer. As I approached he shouted quite correctly, "Halt, who goes there?" I replied "friend," wrong for the Orderly

Officer. As I remember it should have been "visiting rounds." He replied, "Advance friend, and 'reconize' yourself." He had everything against him, yet he insisted upon getting what he wanted always, and he got it. In private life he used to make or bottle the oil that they use in London for frying fish. I have heard that it is a by-product of soap. At all events, upon coming back from leave, he always tipped the major a box of highly scented soap. He finally became our best sergeant and few sergeants had the respect of their men more than had he. If he were ordered to do anything, the thing was done. He never regarded anything as impossible, and his men were the best trained gun crew in our battery.

If you are an N.C.O., don't be afraid of doing *something*, even if you make mistakes—only do something. If you are a sergeant, keep your young officer well posted up with everything. Help him all

you can. Give him all the "dope" as you say here. Remember that all your mistakes are his mistakes in the same way that all your men's mistakes are yours. If your officer is clever he will interfere as little as possible with your command or he will appear to do so. He, of course, must know everything. I remember on a bitter morning getting blazes from the major because when asked why a certain soldier had no cap I could not answer, and being near the man I asked him. This made the major red in the face; he had not had any breakfast; he was annoyed because I did not ask the man's sergeant. This is an unimportant instance, but, of course, my major was right. Except on rare occasions an officer will always work through his sergeant. This rule is elastic.

There is one rule common to every army and that is the right of appeal. If you regard yourself as unfairly treated by a sergeant or corporal you have the right

to see your officer, but you must do it through the sergeant. He may want to discourage you, but insist. It is only fair to your officer and indeed fair to the N.C.O. At meal-time an officer will come round and look at your food and possibly ask for complaints. Don't be afraid to make a complaint if it is a sensible one. Many men don't complain because they fear unpleasant consequences. If your N.C.O.'s are good there will seldom be need for complaints.

## CHAPTER III

### LECTURES

DURING your training there will be a certain number of hours devoted to lectures. These may be very dull. The officer giving them, possibly your own Company or Platoon Officer, may have very little confidence in himself or experience, and will offer most of his information in the first lecture. I remember, when I had been in the Artillery less than two months, having to give lectures to men, some of whom I suspected of having as much information about the subjects as I had. I hoped they didn't know this. Incidentally when the lecture is finished, or just before the time arrives when the officer dare dismiss you, partly for your good and partly because he does not know what else to say, he will ask if anyone wants to ask



any questions—meanwhile breathing a silent prayer that he will be able to answer them. If he is stuck for an answer, he may be able to “hedge”; that is, answer your question in many words containing little information. His words will be so vague that a feeling of exhaustion will creep over you and all interest in the subject will have gone by the time he finishes. This may prevent anyone else from asking any more questions about anything, except, perhaps, about baseball or football.

Once more you will say this can't happen to your army. Wait! “No man is ‘parfect,’ ” as the Jew said when detected in a crime and had no good excuse ready. However, the officer will be able to answer most of the questions except those meant as traps. If you can trap him, respectfully do so, but be careful. It will be good for him and possibly interesting for you, although not necessarily pleasant.



Once, after six weeks' service as an Artillery Officer, having had no previous training except as a private in the Cavalry, I was ordered to lecture on the elements of gunnery to my section. The Major doubtless thought I might find out a little myself during the process; and, at any rate, it would help me to know my men. I went steadily on my journey without shipwreck, keeping well inside my amount of knowledge and finally decided that I knew quite a lot. A certain Corporal with a clever face and a subtle air about him was in my section. I suspected him from the start. I did not know that he was a regular soldier who had spent many months on gunnery courses, and had been trained as a mechanic at Woolwich Arsenal. When I had exhausted my store of knowledge, not much I fear, I asked for questions. Everybody asked at once, "When are we going to get out to the front, Sir?" We probably would soon

have begun to discuss the last winner of the Derby, or the German prison camp near—anything; but the subtle looking Corporal held up his hand and said with a knowing and confident air: “Can you tell me, Sir, when the angle of elevation is equal to the angle of sight?” I shuddered and made a bold answer, “Never.” Then I talked a lot and exhausted him, but I felt very cheap. He knew he had got me. It might interest you to hear the explanation of the question. When a shell passes through the air, gravity or the force attracting any object to the earth’s centre tends to draw it down. Therefore, if you merely point a gun directly at a distant object, the shell will fall short. To correct this you point the gun beyond the object, in other words, you put extra elevation on the piece. It is all worked out for you on the sighting instruments so you have not to calculate. Still a gunner has to know these things and understand

them. The sighting instrument may be out of action sometimes. At a long range one must elevate the gun more than at a short range. Gravity has a longer time to work and the shell at the end of its journey naturally loses speed and drops more. The shorter the range or distance to the target, the less will be your elevation. When firing at very close range, there is hardly any elevation required with a high-velocity gun. The elevation put on the gun is called the angle of elevation. The angle you naturally put on when pointing at an object is called the angle of sight. It is really the angle formed by a straight line passing through the gun to the target, meeting the horizontal plane. The horizontal plane can be found when an ordinary spirit level has the bubble exactly in the centre. When a shell leaves the muzzle of the gun, being freed from the restraint of the steel, it jumps a bit. If you are firing point blank at an object

very close, this jump takes the place of an angle of elevation. On an occasion like this, it may be true that the angle of sight is equal to the angle of elevation. On the other hand, it can be said that the jump is the angle of elevation. The Corporal got me, however. He had doubtless heard many other officers caught in this same way.

Lectures can be interesting or can be very dry, according to the lecturer. I found their great value in getting to know my men. At lectures one always lets the men smoke, but objects to their slumbering with their eyes shut. If you must sleep (it is not good form), learn to sleep with your eyes open. Snoring is forbidden as it disturbs the other men, and hurts the pride of the lecturer, who will take the necessary steps to stop it. However, to be serious, it is a good thing to try and take notes at lectures if you can, and take an

interest in your work. It will be easier in the long run.

Napoleon, the much quoted, said that every soldier has a field marshal's baton in his knapsack.

Sometimes an officer will take you out for a route march, and arriving at suitable country will explain tactics and manœuvres. This will be very interesting, and discipline will be slack until some fool spoils it all and gets fresh. Then similar occurrences will be difficult for all. You will find that your officer will want to make you as happy as possible on all occasions. You know the only reason why discipline is hard to bear and at times obnoxious is owing to the fact that some men have little common sense and presume on good nature. Officers often start off with the object of doing all possible for their men. They are sometimes lenient towards small faults and will try to get upon terms of friendship, though not

familiarity. I don't mean that they will drink with you or tell you unpleasant stories, but rather that they will show their distaste for behaving like superior beings all the time; and their recognition that you are as good a man as they. Some men mistake this for weakness and presume upon it. Consequently some officers become tyrannical.

Often you may think your officer a fool. Perhaps he is, but you won't be able to bet on it. Some people have made some bitter mistakes. I've heard of a man turning round on an officer and telling him some awful truths about his face. The man got several years in prison for it, but it seems to me that if a man can say things to an officer that are not respectful, it is often the officer's fault. You have to help to train your officers. Make it possible for them to regard you as their friends.

## CHAPTER IV

### ASPECTS OF DISCIPLINE

To the recruit saluting is interesting; it seems to him to be part of the business of soldiering. Later it becomes a nuisance and a burden, and he rather hates it. In England the matter is simpler than it is in America, for over there a great deal that is not bad in the old feudal system still remains. A youth in a village generally touches his hat to the squire and the squire always returns the greeting. To do anything else never occurs to either. It is merely an exchange of courtesy.

In the army in spite of discipline and its restraints there is much in common between ranks. They are all soldiers from the field marshal down to the private—brothers in arms—so a greeting is necessary. Obviously one of them must start,



and it is a matter of common sense for the chap of lower rank to salute first. He has the opportunity, with work and enterprise, of being in the position of having himself saluted first. Saluting still goes on at the front, even in moments of danger. I don't think anyone insists upon it, but the men just do it automatically. Incidentally they have learned to be glad to salute their officers.

As a sign of bondage saluting seems to irritate certain people. An American imbued with the spirit of freedom, unless he looks at saluting in the right way may possibly object to it as a sign of autocracy. Let him remember that it is just as compulsory for an officer to salute a private as it is for the officer to be saluted, and that the junior officer must salute his superior as the private must salute his officer—it is merely a method of saying, “How do you do?”

When the first British expeditionary



forces went to France, orders were given to the men not to polish their buttons or their hat badges, and during the retreat from Mons and during the subsequent bitter fighting our men became a little careless about their appearance. This was unavoidable. Men did not shave at all, and went about with beards. When the army settled down to trench warfare, it was found that discipline in some cases had become a little bit lax. Officers and non-commissioned officers, and, of course, many men had been killed. Thousands of reinforcements had been sent out from England, and the *esprit de corps* of some regiments had almost gone out of existence. A general cleaning up became necessary, and in a very short time it was found to be a good thing for everybody concerned to have an inspection parade whenever possible. Consequently at the front the men appear as tidy and smart, if not tidier and smarter, than they do in England.

Of course, in the trenches a man gets covered with mud and dirt. He has no time to shave, but after all, it is quite a small percentage of his time that is spent in the trenches. During the rest of the time he shaves every day, and if he belongs to a regiment that wears brass buttons, he even polishes these. He certainly polishes his hat badges and in summer his boots. This may seem a little bit foolish to you, but truly it is not. If the men are allowed to become slack and untidy in their appearance, their minds will also become slack, and also untidy. You know yourself that after a good shave and wash you feel a different fellow, and better able to face any difficulty that may come along, whereas if you are unshaven and generally unclean you do not feel half the man. Now in France it might be a good idea to remember this, and when going about the village make it a point of being as tidy and smart as possible.

You will find during your service that certain regiments and certain companies have established reputations. It is a curious thing, but at the front when one sees a company or a battalion marching along the road it is quite easy to know almost at a glance what kind of a regiment they belong to. One sees the guard regiments of the British Army a great deal. They represent our finest and best troops, and they always look the smartest. A soldier must always look spick and span whenever possible. It comes under the heading of good discipline.

The Germans have taught us many lessons about modern warfare. It seemed to be their business. They had a good start and we have had to catch up. We hope that now we are doing a bit of the teaching. One thing is true, and very true: the German soldier is a perfect specimen of a modern fighting man. He is very brave and will fire at you after a bombard-

ment in which a cat would lose six of its lives and all of its brains. All the German soldiers are thoroughly disciplined. Our most difficult task was to instill thorough discipline into our army—for in this war discipline is more important than courage. You see it enables the brain at the head of the affair to carry out his purpose definitely and clearly. It is like playing a game of checkers. If your men started moving here and there across the board, you'd lose the game. Even if one man moved you'd find it difficult. When a German soldier is given an order he obeys it to the letter. He keeps his own personal courage at bay as well as his fears. Under modern conditions this makes him a splendid soldier.

You have perhaps often read of British soldiers being regular rotters in back billets, always getting into trouble and always undergoing punishment, and then at

one moment doing something so brave that the highest awards must be given to them. This does not mean for a single instant that this type of man is a good soldier. He is not. The man who has learned to obey to the letter, who can be always depended upon to do his bit even in barracks; who is never late for parades; who does not get drunk too often; who is clean and tidy; polite and respectful, and who definitely wishes to do his best on all occasions; he is the real hero. He is the soldier that any officer is glad to have.

We all have the other fellow and cannot help loving him. If you send him on orderly duty somewhere or expect him to work decently while you are away and not looking, you are sure to be disappointed. One goes on being disappointed. He is often such a decent sort of chap. All his crimes are apparently crimes against himself. They often cause discomfort, how-

ever, to others. Obedience to orders is always a soldier's duty. The Germans have learned this lesson, they have had more time than we have had or you will have, so it was easy. Still they have it, and if we are to do anything we must get it, too. It is very hard, this turning of a free citizen into the pinion of a machine. You will dislike it intensely at first. Still, it has got to be done.

There are always about six men in every company and every battery who are rotters. They are always there. In a battery one finds them at the wagon line. They cannot have a very happy time. They are always up before the C.O. They are not the men who do the heroic things. They often do the other sort. You will find that the crimes that get the sternest punishments are the crimes that cause the other men to suffer.

At Ypres we had to send a working party up to do some unpleasant and

slightly dangerous work, that of fixing up a bomb-proof hole at an observation post. It was at night and just out of the trenches, so they were exposed to organized machine-gun fire. The enemy machine gunner cannot see much in such an affair, but in the hope of getting some one he just traverses or trains his gun in quarter circles. He fires up roads, that is called enfilading a road. These men were under a sergeant as we had few officers, our battery having been divided into two widely separated parts. On the way up the party stopped to get some material from an engineer officer. They saw a number of engineers sitting in front of a fire and doubtless envied them. They got up to the job and had a pretty rotten time of it in the mud. Half way through the night the sergeant counted his men, he ought to have done it before, and found one missing. He could not be found. Towards dawn they all returned and passed through the same



trench. They looked in at the engineers again and saw them still sitting there, some asleep, the others smoking and contented. The missing man was there, too. While his comrades were working and in danger he had been spending the evening with the engineers in the dugout. You'll find just about six such gentlemen in your company or battery. They never do brave things, they never risk their lives at any time if it can be helped. One often wonders what their comrades think of such fellows.

Some soldiers find it very hard to keep out of the orderly office, and, of course, they must be punished even against an officer's impulses. The things an officer will never forgive and always punish severely are the unsporting things—letting other people do your work, for instance, while you slack.

Smart appearance, as I have said, always seems to be an essential quality in a



good soldier. The fellows who are generally seen waiting for trial outside the orderly room look the part in spite of their efforts to clean up. On the other hand, the fellow whom you know to be a first-class man is generally very particular about his appearance.

In peace time this sort of thing is developed easily. The older soldiers take the necessary steps to make the recruit clean and smart, even if it comes to bathing him forcibly in the horse trough. When a new army is established the matter is different and it takes a long time for a man to realize the importance of this feature of discipline. It comes in the end. Much depends upon the officers. If an officer is particular about his turn-out, it generally results that the N.C.O.'s will follow suite and then they make the privates smarten up. You should see some of the Canadians and Australians going about London these days. They are richer than our

own home soldiers and can afford to buy their own footwear and gaiters; in their possession they are kept shining and bright.

One seldom sees an untidy officer. I met one once and thought him an outsider, but with many others I was mistaken. He proved himself a wonderful hero. His name was Slug and this is his story as it came to me:

I was asked to lunch by an old Cambridge friend of mine, an Infantry officer in one of the smartest of our regiments. During seven months this regiment had been lucky in getting very decent fellows out from England as reinforcements, but just at this time an officer arrived whose appearance was hardly attractive. I turned up for lunch at about one o'clock and found the officers of my friend's Company billeted in what was left of an old Inn. I was introduced to the new arrival. He seemed just a little bit unhappy, and at

first I thought that his brother officers might have paid him a little more attention. He sat on my left at the old round table. I felt sorry for him and endeavored to commence a conversation, but finally gave it up as hopeless. He sat there huddled up at the table, shoulders bent and his chin almost touching the board. Judging by his chin his razor must have been very blunt. His tunic looked dirty and his puttees were untidily wound. There was nothing about him that was attractive. The next day I saw him drilling his men near our battery position. Having been well drilled by Slug's predecessor the men were able to do the drill quite well, although it must have been difficult with a chap like Slug in command. There seemed not the slightest doubt of Slug's being quite a bad officer.

About three months after I met him, Slug, with the two other officers of his Company, was holding three fortified posts

at Loos. These fortified posts were truly terrible. Every attempt made to build up and strengthen them, the Germans foiled. It was winter. During the forty-eight hours that Slug and his companions occupied them there was absolutely no shelter at all. Every night a collection of corpses would have to be buried in the shell holes around. About four o'clock in the afternoon Slug was holding the centre post, the Germans commenced to throw what are called "rum jars" at Slug and his two companions holding the posts on each side of him. A "rum jar" is a large trench mortar shell. It comes hurtling ungracefully through the air, and upon arrival at its destination makes a fearful mess. They fired these things for about three quarters of an hour, and then after a ten-minute bombardment with 3-inch field guns, they attacked. The posts on either side of Slug were promptly captured and their occupants taken pris-

oners—he, himself, to the astonishment of his men and the Colonel who could see the whole thing from a long distance, fought like a little tiger. He had been buried by one of the rum jars, but his men had managed to dig him out, and when the Germans came on he seized a rifle and when they came to close quarters he used the bayonet with wonderful effect. They withdrew surprised and then gave the post another burst of rum jars and 3-inch shell. At this time we in the artillery had received Slug's S.O.S. and were helping him. The Germans came on in large numbers, but Slug became almost hysterical and fought like a wildcat. His men were inspired by the sight and fought just as well. Finally the Germans withdrew. Slug fainted, was carried down to the Colonel at the battalion headquarters. The Colonel sent him to England—the King gave him a Victoria Cross. There was not the slightest doubt that Slug was a

hero. There was also not the slightest doubt that Slug was not a very good officer.

Fellows sometimes get awfully careless. To be the opposite is an important aspect of discipline. I remember once being in an observation post and an officer came in to see me with a nasty cut in his arm. It was nothing very special and it only meant binding up the wound with a first field dressing. There was no need for him to go to the doctor about it, but still he was very lucky not to have been killed. It was all due to two Canadians who, strolling along the trench, were unable to resist the temptation of getting some very fine pears from a tree which grew out of the parapet. The trenches at this particular part of the line wound through an orchard. Upon this particular day we were preparing for an attack, and in a systematic manner were very heavily bombarding the German front and support trenches. It seemed

obvious to these two Canadians that if the Germans were getting hell in the form of high explosive shells they would neglect any sniping; the two hungry fellows climbed up the tree and helped themselves to the delicious pears. Nothing happened to them. Unfortunately a German officer on observation duty had seen the performance and promptly gave orders to his guns to fire. They did not succeed in getting any rounds off while the Canadians were up the tree, but my friend happened to be passing at the moment when the shells did arrive, and was lucky to escape with a little flesh wound in his arm. People are always doing things like that. I suppose they do not think.

Men who spend their nights and part of their days a little behind the lines often come up and expose themselves. I suppose they don't realize that the spot where they have exposed themselves often gets shelled after they have gone. I had a



colonel once, a fine chap, who was always very careful not to do this sort of thing, but one day at Ypres he by accident allowed the Germans to see him. All seemed well and he hoped that nothing would come of it. He stayed for a time with the young officer in the observation post to share the danger, but as nothing happened he started for home. After having walked about half a mile he turned around and saw the house being bombarded. Exposing himself to shell fire, he returned and made due apologies to those whom he had endangered. This colonel of ours had a wonderful code of honor—I guess most officers would do the same thing if they thought it would do any good.

Though he never commanded my brigade we were attached to his command for a time at Ypres, and one day near that town I met him, beautifully turned out. We stopped to chat and he said, “D’you know, I love Ypres—life is so interesting



here—always something happening.” And he meant every word of it.

Absence of equipment is another feature that may make the training period uninteresting and difficult, and in the face of which discipline of mind will be necessary if you desire, as you must desire, to retain your proper viewpoint.

There may be but few good rifles, some of them will be old fashioned, entrenching tools may not arrive. Your uniform will get worn out, and it may be difficult to get it renewed. Boots will also wear out, and you may have to go about with worn-out ones. In barracks or at your post, you will be able to have possibly two sets of clothing and you will accumulate more. Life in this respect will become normal. However, just before you embark, it is presumed you will have to get rid of your extras, and will be put on a war footing. You will have but one coat, one pair of

trousers, an extra pair of under pants, and an extra vest. It may happen that on a route march or hike, you will all get wet, soaked to the skin, through not taking your waterproof with you. This most frequently happens to an inexperienced soldier. Arrangements for drying are quite good at the front outside the trenches, but will be perhaps imperfect in the training camp. Expect this. Finally you will always march with complete equipment on your back or in front of your saddle if you are a mounted soldier, and the danger of getting wet will be lessened.

On the transport conditions will be quite different from an ordinary voyage on a first-class liner. There will be parades as usual and little of military discipline will be slackened. If you are a mounted soldier, there will be horses to feed, and attended to. This will be particularly unpleasant in bad weather, as for their safety and through lack of space, they will be

very crowded, below decks most of them. They get a bit ill, poor devils. You may be in a similar state yourself, but the horses have got to be fed and well fed. Prepare for this. On decks at night in the danger zone, talking will be discouraged, and the striking of matches forbidden firmly. This will obviously be for the safety of all—as are most army regulations.

## CHAPTER V

### BEHIND THE FIRING LINE

YOUR first impression of France may be a little bit disappointing. You will possibly arrive at an early hour in the morning, and if you have been clever you will have saved a few biscuits from the day before's rations, because breakfast will be noticeable by its absence. Possibly, however, an arrangement will have been made whereby food is served out before landing.

The first thing you will hear is that you are going to a rest camp. Why it is called a rest camp no one has ever been able to discover. It is really a concentration camp, allowing your staff officers to arrange your transportation up to the front. It gives them a breathing space. The rest camp is by no means restful. They try to keep it tidy and clean, and it will be part

of your duty during your short stay here to do a good deal of the tidying and cleaning. However, you may get some leave and will be able to have a look at the French port. Thousands of children will gather round you as you go along the road and ask you for souvenirs. It is not advisable to give them many of your tunic buttons.

When the British Army first went to France, after a time they had hardly any buttons or hat badges at all. They had given them to the French children and girls. Everybody will be very polite to you, and goodwill and welcome will be written on the faces of all the inhabitants. They now understand quite a lot of English, although it is a rather curious form, the Tommies having given them certain words. They in return have given the Tommies a few, and so for ordinary intercourse a strange mixture is used. In the port it will all be new to you and conse-

quently interesting. You will spend a lot of money and have a thoroughly good time. Beware of some of the women that you may find in the hotels. They may be all right, but at any rate, you are inexperienced and they are not. They understand the soldier mind pretty well; you have had a fairly bad time on the transport, and are in just a fine state to get yourself into a pretty mess.

Before leaving the rest camp it is a good idea to find out what time you have got to be back; get back at the right time or you will find yourself in the guard room, and the least that can happen to you will be to have your leave stopped while at the rest camp. You are now at the front really, and not so very far from the enemy. Discipline will tighten.

In a day or so the good news will arrive, and it will be good news to you, that you are going to entrain the next day. Prepare for an unpleasant shock. You will



AN AMERICAN TAR TREATED BY FRENCH WIDOWS  
Everything possible will be done by the people of France to make you  
happy





not go in a decent day coach. You, with perhaps twenty others, will sit in the floor of a freight wagon. The French have not enough coaches to carry you comfortably. On the outside of the coach is written in French "eight horses," "sixteen men." This may worry you a little, but as you have considerably more brains than a horse you will endeavor to get something to sit on, perhaps some straw.

When Kitchener's Army first went to France, they were very much the same type of men that go to make up an American army. They came from every class of life. It was with astonishment and surprise that they found themselves riding in the same sort of coaches that took their horses. Please try to take this as cheerfully as possible. See that your water bottle is filled, although this may be unnecessary, for at regular stops on the journey the French will supply you with much good coffee, well doped with cognac. This

will tend to cheer you considerably. The journey up to the front is quite a short one, but do not expect to get there within twelve hours. I remember censoring a letter written by one of my men to his family at home, describing the journey. He said that the train had been going about an hour when it stopped; a cow was discovered in front of the engine. It was driven off and the train proceeded. The journey then continued for another two hours and the train once more stopped, it was the same cow. Many of the men enjoyed the journey. There were long stops and they got off the train and looked about a little. It was like English caravanning. Food was very plentiful, and the excitement of at least reaching the goal of all their hopes, helped to keep them up. Certain base fellows threw their friends' hats out of the train. Generally it was quite possible to rescue them, but not always, and so in the morning when the of-

ficers were in anything but a cheerful temper, being hungry and unhappy, these hatless gentry got into serious trouble.

Having reached the rail head for troops, you will be billeted in certain villages. Your Company or Battery will occupy a village of its own. There will probably be two or three farm houses. Each platoon will probably have a farm house of its own. At this stage, feel in your knapsack and see if you have your tin of insect powder. It will be needed. For three years those barns have been occupied by relay after relay of soldiers, all of whom have not carried insect powder. However, the hay or straw will be soft and comfortable. The place is a little dark, but as a bivouac for soldiers not at all bad. It is considerably better than the best dugout in the trenches and much safer.

A French farm house is a curious mass of buildings. It consists chiefly of what we call a middan in Scotland. The mid-

dan is a large concrete well about thirty feet long and eighteen feet wide. At one end it is about six feet deep, but gradually slopes up to the ordinary level of the farm yard at the other end. It is surrounded by a narrow path about five feet wide, and the living rooms of the farm, the stables, cow byres, and barn form a court. Now comes the depressing information, and thank God you have been inoculated—all the waste from all the places I have mentioned, including the cow byres, goes into the well, and only when it is full, the process is a long one, is the lot carted away and put in the fields. Even the drawing room windows, if there is a drawing room, look into this. The result is too unpleasant to describe, especially in the summer, as then the smell is horrible. Millions of flies are to be found here. Hens and pigs spend a good deal of their happy existence on this rubbish. Just about five feet from the heap is the

well where the water supplying the house is drawn, and I hope it is quite unnecessary to warn you against drinking a single drop of it. If you are mad you will do so. A water cart which filters the water for your consumption will go along with your Company. It tastes and smells like a corpse, but it is harmless. The French themselves, for the most part, drink wine of a light nature rather than water.

Madame, the farmer's wife, will always welcome you into her large living room. She will serve you very good coffee at a charge of two cents a cup, though perhaps she may regard you as millionaires and charge you more. She will also sell for a small sum eggs and bacon and very good brown bread which she has made herself. You will all spend your evenings in the farm house living room, and practise the French that you have learned from the ladies near your barracks in America. You will feel very much encour-

aged, for Madame has become used by now to English-speaking soldiers, and although she may not be able to speak English herself, she will be able to follow you pretty well. She is very large and good-natured and not very clean. She invariably has a daughter who is called Marie Louise or Gabrielle. Marie Louise will speak English quite well, although it will be the English of the British Tommy. So if perchance she uses some rather awkward phrases in quite a mild voice, do not be surprised. Don't act on it. In the barn you will be very much crowded, perhaps, and it may be a little bit uncomfortable, but the day will come when the opportunity of sleeping in a barn will be looked upon as a great luxury.

It is well to know a little about the French and Belgian inhabitants of the actual battlefield. Thousands of them live quite happily in constant danger. When foreign friendly troops first arrived

the people were very hospitable and could not do too much for the soldiers who had come to help France in her hour of need. They are still very polite, but naturally not quite so hospitable. We were sometimes very thoughtless, and there were men who seem to enjoy spoiling a good thing. In any case, the people are not very rich and could not afford to continue giving food and drink away.

Close up to the line the old farmer found it dangerous to continue his ordinary farm work, and in addition his son or able-bodied helper was called to the army. He might have starved, but found that money could be made by selling certain farm produce and drinks to the soldiers, and therefore, you will be able to buy eggs, bread, coffee, light beer, and milk.

Now it is noticed by some men that the profits in the farm house seem very large, and they are. It is perfectly fair business, however, and incidentally no matter how



rich you are, don't spoil this farmer merchant by refusing change. His profits are enormous as it is, and you will make him overcharge other troops not quite so rich. However, I know several poor women of France who just don't bother, and take whatever price is offered them. Sometimes if a man is hard up she won't take anything, and she is generally one of the very poor. I know this to be true.

About ten miles or more behind the lines where you may be in reserve, the people upon whom you are billeted may be a little unpleasant. If they are, one cannot blame them. They have not perhaps experienced the full horror of the situation for the civilians, and are only conscious that during a period of nearly three years their stock of knives, forks and spoons has been pinched by a long succession of officers' servants and others. Their best pastures have been ruined by the tramp of artillery and cavalry horses. Of course,





MADAME AND MONSIEUR AS HOSTS

You'll have home comforts in just such a comfortable peasant's home as is this



they ought to realize that we are unable to help this last offence, but some of them fail to. An officer's servant may borrow a spoon or a fork and perhaps forget to return it. After a year or two Madame has hardly any left, and she therefore refuses to let a single thing out of her hand, and the man forgetting that he is not the only soldier in the world thinks she is very mean. Some farm people of a business-like frame of mind show care, and by good shop keeping are able to put such losses down to wear and tear. Some with sons at the front, and among these are many fine old ladies, love the soldiers, and are willing to give them anything. The attitudes are a bit varied, but I do not think that either English or American people would undergo with patience that which has been the lot of these French people. Poor devils, they have an awful time of it!

I have seen a bunch of pale-faced women rushing away from a house beating their

breasts and weeping, while their homes are being shelled to bits. I saw a woman standing one night by the side of what had been her house. It was practically burnt to the ground. Two dead cows were in the cow-house, and amidst the few small flames that every now and again were darting up, her husband with a silly grin was catching the few hens that were left. It was raining hard, and the woman told me that this was the third house from which she had been shelled. Beside her was a tall fellow with the hat badge of the Rifle Brigade. He was bad at French and could only repeat, "Bon courage, Madame." She was replying, "Oui M'sieur." He gave her a gold piece, and I gave her what I thought a five-franc bill. To my sorrow when I got home I discovered it was a twenty-five franc bill. I am not sorry now, but I was hard up at the time. She waited there in the rain while the chickens shrieked as her husband caught them, and

a few Tommies searched for shell fuzes. As I left she said, "The war, it is very sad for the soldiers, but it is also very sad for the civilians." I guess it is.

I caught a corporal once in the act of removing vital bricks from a house that had been shelled, but was in fairly good repair. He wanted the bricks for his horses to stand on during the winter. I suggested that if the war ended suddenly the people returning would have nowhere to live. He replied, "Well, let 'em live in 'Bivvyacks' like we does." Then he told me a fearful tale about the extortions of the French farmer near his wagon line. He just did not understand.

## CHAPTER VI

### YOUR ENGLISH COUSINS

It is possible that some of you will land in England and therefore a few remarks about my country may be of use to you. The climate is rather unique and, though it never gets as cold or as hot as in America, it is far from ideal—it is rather of the sort concerning which no one becomes enthusiastic, but to which all become accustomed.

Liverpool may be your landing place. The captain of your ship won't even know until he is quite close. Everything will depend upon the situation. If you should arrive there you may not be very favorably impressed. The Mersey doubtless a few centuries ago was a pretty stream or small river, but now it looks like a big mud pond. New York has its wonderful sky line, and having much natural beauty

could be nothing else but beautiful, while Liverpool, though it is now a wonderful commercial port, had to be made. You will see that the town does not seem to possess the beauties of American cities. The atmosphere is often very heavy, and the smut from factory chimneys lands on the buildings and makes them very black.

However, you will not get loose at Liverpool, but will probably entrain at once, and will find yourself passing through the English country. It is very pretty and tidy looking. The troop train will be pretty full. If it is winter the first thing you will be conscious of is that it is very cold; although it is not freezing. The train may not be heated at all, and instead of being in an ordinary day coach where you can walk up and down you will be in a little compartment with a door at each end opening to the outside of the train. The seat is well padded right up the back, generally in red carpet. Eight of you will



be together. You will dislike it slightly at first. The train may go fast; it may crawl; but whatever it does you will get plenty of food on the journey. You will find the people very glad to see you, and the people from every village you pass through will cheer you wildly. You will see about the country and on the platforms many British soldiers from young Lieutenants up to Generals. They will be interested in you. If you see on one of the platforms a young officer wearing a monocle, very smartly turned out, and looking rather pleased with himself, the fact that on the stage in America you have seen a similar fellow, does not pardon your calling him "Algy." Nothing will happen to you for doing it, because you will be able to dart back among the others. On the other hand, it will have the effect of making the said officer regard you as a bunch of rough necks, and his opinion of you and your army will be prejudiced. Later,



when you have been to the front and seen a similar officer looking precisely the same, just as well turned out, even with the monocle, standing in precisely the same way in the midst of great danger and heartening his men in a well-bred voice, your ideas will change.

I met a New Zealander in a hospital once who had been driven mad while out on a fearful patrol after the Battle of Loos. During this patrol, when he was creeping along quite close to the Germans he found two Guard Officers, both wearing monocles—with their corporals they were all that was left of their platoons. Standing in a big shell crater, talking in a perfectly modulated tone, of the sort that you here call an “English accent,” they were discussing the hunting of the year before. My friend got down with them and they offered him sardines. New Zealanders are something like Americans, and this one had never met anyone quite like these of-

ficers—except on the stage in New Zealand where what is called the “English Johnny” is a familiar and amusing character. They were perfectly calm, although knowing their danger. My friend had to continue his patrol, but he later heard that a few hours after the incident the officers were both killed. Perhaps such British officers may appear to you to be fops and almost effeminate, but I desire to remark that you will find them very brave men.

Our accent over there is quite different from yours, though before the Revolution we all spoke alike. Language changes a great deal in the course of centuries. Where education is similar the change will be uniform; where it is different it will not be uniform.

As our army is now a conscripted one, you will find a plain British Tommy with what will seem to you an affected way of speaking. Of course, he may be affected. Don't be surprised at this. Be amused if you like, but don't decide that because he

talks like one of your mimicking actors he is a fool. He may be often, but he is not always an ass. You will, of course, understand in time.

Before the war we British were perhaps a little narrow in our ideas. We were not conscious of being so, else we might have changed. Since the war there has been a large influx of oversea troops who came from lands just as free, just as wonderful as yours. They taught us much and we have taught them a little, with the result that we are nearly merged into a hybrid sort of people, and have given up being surprised at anything. We will be glad if at first you don't form fixed opinions.

You will find the women of England charming and sympathetic, but it will take you a long time to understand the men. They are very conservative and do not make friends very quickly; but when you've passed the outer wall, it will be simple.

It is true, the average Englishman does not understand America and Americans, but one good thing about this war will be our learning to appreciate you Americans at your real value. You'll think us fearfully old fashioned and behind the times. Perhaps we are, but be not too sure; at any rate, do not decide at once.

I am going to give you another tip: do not tell an Englishman that George Washington was an American. He thinks in a vague sort of way that George Washington was an ally of his ancestors while they were fighting for freedom from the remnants of absolutism left in the hands of poor old George III. I think he is right. And just another tip—Englishmen are very fond of King George V, although they say little about it. If you suggest that a monarchy seems a funny sort of rule for modern people to live under, they won't know quite what to say, but you may be sure that they will not be gratified.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE BRITISH TOMMY

A GREAT deal has been written about the British Tommy; perhaps not so much in America as in England, where we regard him as very much a hero.

Incidentally, during times of peace the soldier was to a large extent ignored. The officer, of course, had a certain social status, but the actual private in the army was looked upon as almost an inferior sort of being. In peace time, the British enlisted man often came from the poorer classes. However, he was caught young and an excellent process of development commenced upon both his body and mind. The finished article was a fine specimen of humanity—still, however, very little attention was paid to the average private during the days of peace. The moment

war broke out all this was changed, and people now look upon the soldier as an ideal hero. If one stops to think, it is perhaps a little bit comical. His virtues become magnified; his faults are looked upon with a kindly eye. People cheer him in the streets and everybody commences to burn incense to this national idol. His officers, however, have appreciated him during the whole time of his service, and they know what sort of a chap he really is. You will meet the British Tommy by the score in both England and France. Perhaps, it is possible to give you a slight insight into his character.

It is a common fallacy in America that a rigid kind of feudal system exists in England—that the man who earns his living is ground down by the man who has a long list of ancestors behind him. In other words, a great mass of British people are kept in subjection by the aristocracy. You will think this, and nothing that is

said will prevent you from continuing to think so. Of course, you are wrong. Nobody in Great Britain, no matter how humble, is ground down by anyone else—of course, certain worms will crawl along the ground. Great Britain is the birthplace of rule by the people, for the people. At times we have had Kings who for a season have succeeded in ruling without the support of Parliament; but sooner or later they have had to come down. Our history for six hundred years has been a struggle between Autocracy and Democracy. Autocracy has not always won. At the moment Democracy is well on top. Now, you will notice that the English soldiers are very respectful towards their officers. This is not because they are frightened or that they fear punishment. It is because respect is born in them, and they know their officers.

You may meet quite a number of British soldiers at different times, and you will



find them entirely different from your own comrades. Still, they will listen with the greatest of interest to all you have to say about America. They will be thrilled, and will envy you when they hear that your pay is three times as great as their own. When you pass remarks about their being old fashioned and behind the times; when you complain about the discomforts of travel in Europe; and when you tell them how very much superior everything in America is to that in Europe, they will still be interested. But don't mistake this for simpleness! You will never hear a British Tommy say one good word for England or the English. He just doesn't do it because he has never had to.

He has not had the same chance for expansion that you have had; he has earned much less money than you have; he has never been able to travel to the same extent; his food, all his life, has been of the simplest. Consequently, you will find him





GOOD-HEARTED, HARD-FIGHTING TOMMIES

Though the sun is shining, there is plenty of water in the trench to make for discomfort



very humble. He growls a great deal about things. Apparently nothing seems to suit him—but you will only find this coming out while things are going easily and comfortably. When things are going wrong and he is in extreme discomfort, no more cheerful fellow will be met in the wide, wide world. He is devoted to his officers, but he won't tell you this. You may irritate him a little when in your zeal for America you are giving thanks to God too intensively. You know the average Englishman knows as much about America and Americans as he knows about Timbuctoo and the natives thereof.

In America advertisement is developed a great deal more than it is in Europe. If you have goods here you advertise intensively. We people in England don't understand this a little bit and we are apt, unfortunately, to judge you wrongly. However, this must change; Englishmen who have lived in America any time at all know

the great qualities of kindliness, charity, manliness and decency that are so marked in the American character. Englishmen find out to their astonishment that one of the characteristics of the average American is humility and a desire to learn. However, when you have been with us in England for a little time, we will learn. Will you please give us a chance?

## CHAPTER VIII

### TRENCH LIFE

WHEN Marshal Joffre out-manœuvred the Germans, the result being the victory of the Marne, they commenced to retreat. At first it was almost a rout, but gradually it became less precipitate and the enemy choosing the best country formed long lines of trenches of unique design. They zigzagged in a curious manner and were so cleverly constructed that a man entering them found himself in a regular maze. They also developed to an enormous extent the use of barbed wire, with the result that the French and British found it impossible to break through, and finally upon the coming of winter were compelled to build trenches of similar design. The trenches were difficult to take, but the most formidable thing about them was the barbed wire entanglements.

If you arm yourself with a couple of good Colt guns, and get in a pretty deep hole, having surrounded yourself with many square yards of barbed wire; if you have fixed stakes in the ground and made a regular spider web of the place by drawing wire tightly and then leaving a lot of it loose, ten men armed with similar weapons would never get you. In their efforts they would be delayed by the wire to such an extent that you could kill them one by one.

After a time we found a method whereby we could cut the visible wire, and this made the capturing of the first system of trenches comparatively easy. But wire can be cleverly hidden in the grass or so placed that it can be immediately unrolled at important points such as roads, etc. Of course, it is impossible to get through it until it is cut, and as the enemy has hidden machine guns trained upon the particular spots you can well imagine that no

matter how brave a man is he will have a horrible job of it. This may explain the stagnation that exists, as you must realize that the Germans found the same difficulty as did we.

I suppose many of you are wondering how you will feel when you first get into the trenches. I am certain that you are looking forward to it with pleasurable excitement. There is plenty of excitement, certainly.

I am going to give you an impression of the little ordinary things that struck me when I first got into a communication trench and finally reached the fire trench.

The actual two main lines of trenches are generally in the open, although at parts of the line they run through woods. Most of the trenches of my experience have been fairly well exposed to one another.

Communication has to be maintained under cover by day and night. This is done by means of the communication



trench. Men do walk overland by night and sometimes by day during the winter. The mud is often very thick and deep in the communication trench, and if you are feeling very much alive the possibility of getting knocked out seems very slight. One might advise you always to stick to the communication trench, but you won't. However, be fairly careful. A bullet comes very swiftly and kills you in less than a second. People through carelessness or inexperience run a lot of risks. When I first got to the front the idea of being fired at had a certain amount of interest about it that was pleasurable. The major one day took me down to an observation post. It was a fine day and we ignored the communication trench. The O.P. was close up to the front line just behind the trenches. It was called the Brasserie, a large brewery which had received many thousands of shells, but being of such flimsy construction most of them refused

to detonate in it and passed on. However, it was pretty well knocked about, and with difficulty a few officers could perch in the roof and observe. It has since succumbed to the efforts of the Germans and is now but a heap of ruins.

The major knew a way down to the O.P. whereby one could follow certain directions and remain out of sight. We got there all right. The thing seemed easy. If a bullet came anywhere near us, duck would go the major's head. I thought him unnecessarily nervous at the time. I've changed my mind since. We spent an interesting period at the post and hardly heard a rifle shot, although we were just fifty yards behind the front trench. The whole thing was simple, interesting, and very enjoyable; and a contempt for the Germans took possession of my mind. We went back and the next day I was ordered to take the junior subaltern down to the Brasserie.

We left the road and started off across country. In a vague way I remembered the major's course and carelessly followed. On we went, talking gaily about nothing in particular, both pleased to be at the front. Half way down I noticed that an old Tommy was walking behind us carrying something on his back. We had got two-thirds of the way down when a hissing sound swept past my left ear. A second passed and another bullet just missed my friend's right ear. We fell down on our faces; so did the Tommy, muttering "the Barskets," only he did not say "Barskets." We crept into the communication trench, promptly followed by the Tommy. You see he had seen two officers walking down what he regarded as a new and pleasant way and obviously a safe one; he followed and nearly got stung in consequence. I have been a little more careful since.

One day at a quiet part of the line I had been observing from the front line trench.

A subtle minded young officer had made use of a hole in a tree, a willow I think, and had fixed a fine little O.P. for himself in the bosom of the tree. I spent a long time observing there during his absence. There was room only for one. The trenches were a good way apart, about four hundred yards. The owner of the tree arrived, but suggested that the trenches were so far apart that it would be quite safe to observe from the trench with my head above the parapet; it really was fairly safe, too, and I could see better. I arranged some sandbags carefully. The whole thing was quite unnecessary; required no courage, only a display of inexperience and foolhardiness. At dinner that night I modestly boasted a little about this stunt. The major might have sat on me, but being clever, seized the chance to deliver a lecture on foolhardiness.

He said that the primary duty of a soldier was to fight for his country, not to die for it. There was nothing heroic about

a man who exposed himself unnecessarily. He was merely a fool. A dead soldier was useless and was buried in the ground, and finished with, so far as his country was concerned. He had to be replaced. Months and much worry had been spent in his training and then he foolishly threw his life away, causing worry and trouble all around. His family doubtless regarded him as a hero, and his name appeared on the local roll of honor. If he had been careless he was not a hero by any means. My action had been merely a display of carelessness. The major pointed out that the time came only too often when an officer or a man had to expose himself for some specific purpose, and then it had to be done. If he died in the effort it was unfortunate, but it was not his fault. In the same way that many martyrs in history were merely tactless, so many soldiers lauded to the skies as heroes have just been careless.

You see the ordinariness of warfare when a whole nation is in arms causes people to take quite a cool view of things. You know, you may be a hero in the eyes of the newspapers, and in the eyes of your family, but you will never be a hero in the eyes of your comrades, or very seldom. At the front there is very little time to watch heroic stunts.

The ideal soldier is the chap who each day does his very best to help things along, avoids getting himself disliked by his N.C.O.'s and officers; avoids being taken up to office as much as possible, and also, unless he is particularly skilful, curbs himself from making excuses when caught.

I have branched from my first impressions of the trenches, but the digression is particularly appropriate, as it is about the trenches that carelessness plays most havoc.

A communication trench, as the name implies, exists to maintain communication

with the front line. Running at right angles, or nearly so, to the fire trench it is in danger of being enfiladed, that is, getting swept with shrapnel by a gun pointing straight down its length. You see, it runs straight at the Germans. A communication trench makes use of every scrap of cover. It winds down hedges, though this is difficult, because a hedge invariably in Northern France and Flanders suggests a ditch for carrying off water. It will attack houses and ruins and make use of everything to hide itself from sight. Where it cannot hide itself it makes at regular intervals a quick turn to the right, then a quick turn to the left, another quick turn to the left, and then goes on its journey. It does this at regular intervals. It has made a sort of square which protects the preceding bit of trench from being enfiladed.

Sometimes there are dizzies. You have seen a stream with an island in its middle



wider than the stream itself. Now a communication trench sometimes widens itself out or bulges to three times its own width; a sort of sugar loaf is formed in the middle of the bulge, which is strengthened and built up to a diameter of about twelve feet. The communication trench runs around each side and meets, forming a single trench again. Our Tommies call these things "dizzies" for some reason or other. Perhaps they get dizzy, having to go round them so much. However, they are just called dizzies. A fellow once asked a Tommy, a captain told me the story, why they gave them this name, and he replied: "Well, Sir, yer git a 'un in the trench, and when yer carn't git 'im yer run 'im rawnd and rawnd until he gits dizzy—then yer settle 'im." A similar method of procedure is said to be applied to the killing of a small owl in New Zealand, a very inquisitive bird. He is fairly tame and from a tree will follow your

movements carefully. His head seems to go round like the hub of a wheel. The thing to do is to go round and round him until his head screws off. The dizzy story and the killing of the owl are equally true.

If you first go down a communication trench in the summer you will find it quite a pleasant walk. The "dizzies," if there are "dizzies," appear quite frequently, and in any case there are safe places on the way. If you are going to be shelled you can generally find some hole to get into. Incidentally this is a very undignified kind of war. In moments of stress all the dignity leaves you even if you are a Brigadier-General. Unless your duty is important, you'll get into the nearest hole and stay there until the danger is past. We've given up a great deal of our old romantic ideas, you know, but we've gained a lot of common sense—so keep your eyes on the dizzies if there is any chance of being shelled, and crouch well up to the leeward side when you hear

a bang and a hissing sound coming at you. A bit may get you on the back, of course, if it is a good shot. This is another proof of the lack of dignity in this war. Years ago if a man was wounded in the back it was a sign that, to put it politely, he was making a strategic retreat. Nowadays a high explosive shell may fall behind you even if you are advancing up a communication trench. It bursts in every direction, so a bit may get you.

A communication trench always starts off well. This is owing to the fact that certain persons like yourself have a contempt for the man who designed it, and prefer for a time to follow the track, worn by the men going up at night, that runs beside the trench. However, you will have walked about one hundred yards and then the trench shows signs of wear. It is an ordinary sort of ditch, about three or four feet wide at the bottom. In its youth it was narrower, but it has gradually got

wider. It is about five feet deep. The earth taken from it has been piled up on each side, forming a mound. Along each side you will see that stakes have been driven in and expanded metal stretched between to keep the earth from sliding. Sometimes hurdles are made of three or four stout stakes with thinner branches of trees threaded through them. These are driven in and attached firmly to the sides of the trench. The stakes go up about two feet above the level of the ground, and the earth that has been taken from the trench is piled up against them. Hence you are walking up a narrow lane hemmed in by earth. This is a trench in its perfection. Alas, Mr. Bosche has a dislike for a perfect communication trench and takes pains to knock it about a great deal. Hence it is always in an imperfect state. The dizzies are generally all right. They are so small that it is difficult to get a direct

hit on them, but the sides are generally in a pretty bad state, especially in winter.

The trench may be very long. I suppose as the crow flies the distance it covers is not great, but it winds about so much that by the time you get to the fire trench you feel that you have walked a couple of miles. As you go up you will meet people, some looking unhappy and worried, especially if the trench has been bombarded and the engineers have been mending it. The most unhappy looking are the Artillery signallers. They have wires attached to the sides of the trench and the sappers in mending it have ignored their wire, and they cannot tell which is theirs or which the other battery's. They tap in occasionally and find themselves talking to all kinds of irate people. You will notice as you go that at the sides of the trench there are rows of telephone wires, sometimes tidily arranged and labelled, sometimes all tangled up. They try to keep them tidy,

but a shell has a habit of breaking wire even if it bursts a little way off, and the broken ends get all mixed up. Then you will meet an engineer officer in charge of a working party repairing the trench. Don't be surprised if he looks quite smart and clean. He will talk, perhaps, to your officer if he is English. If French he will express pleasure in some way. However, don't expect to see him looking fearfully serious. People get very flippant at the front.

On you will walk, and soon you will be getting fairly close to the fire trench. It is not a bit exciting. As you get nearer you will catch up to people carrying all sorts of things, such as sheets of corrugated iron which were never designed for transportation up a trench. Sometimes they will be carrying long stakes and lots of lumber which catch in the corners. The language of the British Tommy, though sincere and to the point, is not at all ele-

gant. There is one word he uses at frequent intervals. You'll find out what it is.

Soon you will see masses of built-up sandbags like the dizzies, only they are not round. Some of them have an elegant look, some of them bulge out and threaten at any moment to tumble down. A man may spend days fixing up one of these squares and one sandbag will burst or get broken at the bottom, and if not attended to at once the whole thing will collapse. However, whenever possible these squares of sandbags will be supported by the hurdles I spoke of or the sheets of expanded metal. At any rate, you will see a mass of these squares and the whole thing looks like the entrance to a maze.

If it is summer you will see quite a lot of men sitting about, sometimes reading papers and magazines, and if it is an English trench at least four people will be bending over what they call a "Dexie," and if an Australian trench, what they call



a "Billy" making tea. My impressions of the trenches at all times and seasons has been made up of Tommies making tea. Some men will be filling sandbags—rebuilding or strengthening the square masses.

These squares form the traverses of the trench, and prevent the enemy from enfilading from a flank, for the trenches wind about a great deal and at parts present a straight line to the enemy. However, you will follow the maze a few yards farther on and will find yourself in the actual fire trench and the nearest point to the Germans. It will be as ordinary a performance as going down Broadway, in fact the communication trench may be called Broadway. The fire trench looks neat, as it must be. It doesn't stretch far, but is interrupted by one of the squares we saw before.

It might be well to explain here that all trenches are not below ground. They are

better if they are, but in Northern France and in most of Belgium during the winter one strikes water at about twelve inches. The front of the trench, therefore, is built up from the ground. It may be twenty feet thick and slope gradually off to the Germans. It is made up of earth largely, and bully-beef tins, and all sorts of rubbish. This is called the parapet. About three feet behind the parapet a parados appears. This may be one of the squares of sandbags that you noticed on entering the trench. It forms a narrow lane. The parados prevents bits from a bursting high explosive shell from flying back. Many of the trenches you may occupy will be formed principally of a parapet and a parados. They require much more work than the ordinary trench because they depend often upon sandbags, and one sandbag bursting will cause a lot of trouble. Sandbags require careful filling. They must not be too full and not too empty, as

it all depends upon what you want them for. I don't expect you will err in filling them too full.

As you go along the trenches you will notice sentries on duty in the fire trench. They have chosen certain spots where the German parapet has been knocked down a bit, and are watching out for the heads of careless Germans. The parapet in yours will not be perfect, so look out! Often when you are going along feeling perfectly safe you will be astonished to see quite a lot of the German trench. Obviously you can be seen if anyone is looking. In the winter some trenches of the built-up sort get in a very bad state; the parapet seems to be slipping away. The trouble is that in the winter the Infantry spend such short intervals in the trenches that they only get started on repairs when they are relieved. Also, they don't enjoy building up the trench for the people who follow them. This is human nature, and so the responsi-

bility for keeping up the repairs rests on no one in particular. Sometimes where the parapet is low a danger notice is placed, but as it remains lying about or floating after the trench has been repaired, one grows to ignore these signs. It seems that the British are not good at building trenches. You will be astonished at the beauty of construction displayed by the enemy in his.

One day in the winter I was wading through a trench in which there was about three to four feet of water. Little bridges on unsteady legs had been made, but some time the legs at one end had collapsed, leaving the boards floating. One going along suddenly found one's self in a deep pool of water. The boards get very slippery, too. It is impossible not to fall in occasionally. My suggestion is to arrange your fall so that you won't come down on your side. You will be supplied with big rubber boots reaching to your waist.

While these are new they keep a fellow fairly dry about the feet. They seem to be part of the trench furnishings, and are handed on to the people who relieve you. Obviously it is a good idea to think of the man who will use them next.

On this particular day I had fallen in a few times, and arriving at a particularly unpleasant place got on to some higher ground. Bang, whizz! and a sandbag an inch from my head burst, and two Tommies crouching near yelled: "You lucky lad." Tommies don't speak as a rule so familiarly to officers, but that spot had trapped several people before who were not so lucky.

There is so much water about that it is almost impossible to fill sandbags sufficiently quickly to repair the damage which is being done daily.

Your first experience in the trenches will probably be interesting, but in a quiet part of the line—there are many such.



#### A RAIN OF FIRE

The streams of flame and smoke from the flame throwers can be plainly distinguished. The Germans invented this gentle weapon, but the Allies perfected it and turned it on them





You will be, possibly, the guests of some other company of more experience, and they will make things as pleasant as possible for you. But don't judge trenches by this first experience! Many people imagine that something fearful is happening all the time; to their minds there is constant banging. As a matter of fact, a trench is often for hours as quiet as any peaceful countryside in America. Of course, it gets fearfully noisy sometimes when your own Artillery are bombarding the opposite trench. If they are using field guns and the shells are passing over your head don't remain in the open. Get behind something. A shell may be badly made. The copper driving band may have come off during flight, and the shell will consequently fall short, and as the target is very close it may fall on top of you. Most experienced soldiers get under cover at once. It is also a good thing to watch out when the enemy trench is being bombarded

opposite you. If the trenches are very close he may not retaliate, but you never know, and at any rate, he is going to return the business in some way. He won't fire at your battery. That is one of the unpleasant things about this war. The Infantry on both sides always get it! An Artillery officer starts a pleasant bombardment of the Hun trench, and if the day is a good one enjoys himself thoroughly. It is quite an interesting diversion from a good observation post. If the battery has properly responded to his orders he will go back and express pleasure to them, and they will regard themselves as first-class heroes. Meanwhile the Hun has responded with a good many shells into your communication trench and you suffer. He does not seem to bombard front-line trenches quite so much as do we. It is said that the German Infantry officers object to this for fear of retaliation. Hence when coming down a communica-

tion trench while your Artillery are bombarding the German trench near, look out! Keep your eyes on any holes that are about. It is always the first round that is dangerous. After the first, and there is often an interval of several minutes, you have time to get out of it into some safe place. Still people are very careless!

I was in an observation post once right up in the roof of a house when a staff officer visited me, and I showed him a little of the hostile country. He was very charming and helped to pass a cheerful hour. He left with many thanks, and to my horror walked calmly out of the front door, well exposed to the Hun. It was very brave of him, I suppose. One might have admired his coolness! Half an hour afterwards I was crouching in the cellar of that house, certainly surrounded by many sandbags and fairly safe, but the house above me was receiving many "crumps." It was a nuisance because my

best Ziess glasses had been forgotten in my rush down the ladder when the first shell arrived on the road in front of the house. The Bosches started this business at about eleven thirty, and went on for two hours, although they fired only about thirty big shells. Each round was, however, followed by a spray of shrapnel well to the rear. We were fairly safe, although the men's stew boiling in the back yard showed signs of getting ruined. We did not go out to get it, but just crouched hesitatingly, as every time we decided to go out another shell would come. As we sat there to my astonishment I saw two Infantry soldiers calmly walk into the back yard. I went out to them. They saluted. Soldiers still salute at the front. One had two ugly fuzes in his hands. I asked them what the hell they were doing, didn't they know the house was being bombarded? Oh yes! they knew, but they wanted to see if anyone had been hurt, and also wanted

the fuzes. I thought this unfair, as I felt that the fuzes ought to belong to me as I was the object of the bombardment. However, they very kindly gave me one and then strolled off.

You'll collect shell fuzes all right. They are not very heavy and the markings on them look interesting. Also you will risk your life very often to get them. I have seen a gun position being heavily bombarded by about two hundred shells, and as evening crept on crowds of gunners and Infantry fellows, armed with spades, started to accumulate, and young officers, too, only they didn't carry the spades. My dugout got a "whizzbang" about six yards from it one day, and as I was going on leave the next, I wanted the fuze badly; but I had to put my servant as a sentry near the place to stop others from rushing to get it. I even had to watch him, for I'm sure he would have pinched it himself. At Ypres the hunt for shell fuzes is

not so keen. They are so common there. You are quite certain to be one of the collectors, and you will either bring the prizes home to your family, sell them to the supply men, or lose them—you will probably do the latter. Sometimes the wretched things come hurtling through the air from the efforts of Archibald. Archibald is a nuisance. He is an anti-aircraft gun that goes about on a motor lorry. His noise is disturbing at lunch time, and he seldom seems to hit anything, but he does keep the airplanes well up in the air and disturbs the observer who is looking for you.

In the trenches you will seldom be very much disturbed by bomb dropping from aircraft. They might hit their own Infantry. I had a friend who, after a weary day in the air observing for our battery, having been exposed to the German Archibalds, took such a dislike to the Germans that he came down quite low and dashed along above their trench at a terrific rate,

pouring his machine gun into them. This was satisfactory to him, but the Germans shot at him with their rifles, and a rifle elevated will fire a bullet a long way. It comes down somewhere and gains velocity on the journey. It generally comes down in an Artillery position and makes things a little uncertain.

In the trenches you will need to watch out for falling shrapnel fired by your own side at hostile aircraft, and, in fact, it is always a good thing to be very careful about exposing yourself to such machines. He won't hit you with a bomb, but he will signal to his artillery. Even they may not get you, but he will be able to tell them when they are on the spot, and the next lot of fellows coming along will get it in the neck. Generally in field-service uniform if you stand still you won't be seen. Just a few men walking along are safe, but if a platoon of Infantry continue marching the dust they disturb will give



the show away. If they look up it is very easy for the observer to spot them. A face from a great height looks perfectly white—so if you are forbidden to look up remember the reason. In a battery it is very important not to show yourself. If you are in a comfortable sort of place, letting an airplane see you is a sure way of getting the farm house where you live under the care of Madame and Marie Louise smashed to pieces, and the gun emplacements that have taken weeks to make, destroyed. This is merely common sense. Still, people are very careless and don't think. Warning is always given when hostile aircraft are approaching, and every one with any common sense ought to get under cover. In the actual trenches you will at times get but little sleep. At certain times you won't be allowed even to enter a dugout, but will have to sleep on the fire step. You may have no blankets even in the winter, and will have to sleep

in the rain and damp with cold, wet feet. On these occasions the time in the front trench will not be very long. After leaving the trenches you will probably spend a few days in what are called fortified posts. You won't do very much work by day except repair work, and judging by the appearance of many of these fortified posts they need it pretty badly.

I suppose you have all read about the first Christmas day in the trenches, when at certain parts of the line the soldiers on each side stepped into No Man's Land, exchanged hats, and generally had an interesting time. It has never occurred since. Hate has taken too firm a possession of the mind of the soldier to allow this sort of thing to happen again. Besides, it is discouraged by the Senior Officers on both sides. You see, we just can't trust the Germans. It is an awful pity. However, at parts of the line where the trenches are very close together, you

will often have the chance of telling the Germans in good solid American what you think of them. If you are a Pennsylvania Dutchman, this will be simple, although a good many Germans seem to be able to speak English. However, even this is discouraged.

I remember one night having to go down to the trenches, and as I approached the communication trench I could hear a mighty shouting, punctuated by rifle shots and machine-gun fire. The whole thing sounded like an exciting game of football. Everybody seemed to be shouting and laughing. When I got down to the fire trench it was possible to hear some of the things both sides were saying. I am afraid that our men were not particularly polite in their remarks. It was impossible to understand everything the Germans said, but I dare say there were some pretty solid phrases sent over in Dutch. Both sides seemed to call one an-

other by their Christian names. One could hear the Germans calling out "Tommy," and the Tommies replying by calling out "Fritz." All I could hear the Germans say was: "How do you do?" "It is a nice night to-night." "Have you any cigarettes, Tommy?" "Gott save our 'cracious' Kaing." There was much German spoken which I could not understand. That night seemed quite the wrong sort of night to spend killing people. The stars were shining very brightly, and there was a wonderful full moon with just a gentle breeze blowing. It was late in September, and the trenches had not become muddy and unpleasant. I remember walking about in the trenches; bullets were whizzing about overhead, although one was perfectly safe. The books I had read of people standing on the battlements and fortifications came back to me. I must say that the feeling was really enjoyable. I was so safe. One felt that one was trying

to do the things that one's forefathers had done. Incidentally, I was doing nothing. Before this war we had got so hopelessly civilized. Many of us had found life such a certain thing. There never seemed to be any danger of anything unpleasant happening. Although in many ways the war has lowered the value of human life, to the actual individual soldier life has become of supreme importance, so that one perhaps *lives* more at the front than anywhere else.

In trench warfare the people in the trenches don't spend all their time building up broken-down parapets, although at times it will seem to you that your life is that of a filler of sandbags. There is a miniature kind of warfare going on all the time. It relieves the monotony and keeps the enemy busy. Besides, one must be prepared for anything the enemy may have up his sleeve. You, yourself, will be concerned mostly with "patrols" and

“listening posts.” Listening posts are unpleasant things. As the name suggests, the person in a listening post has to listen. As a rule, it can’t be done in the trench. People are always talking and flopping about in the mud, so in order to secure the listener as much quiet as possible, shallow lanes called saps are run out a little way into the place between the trenches called “No Man’s Land.” One would think that at this date “No Man’s Land” would require but little explanation, and yet I was talking to a fellow in one of your big machine shops here about the war, and he said—“Anyway, it was a good thing that the British had now captured ‘No Man’s Land,’ as it must have been a horrid place.” Unfortunately, “No Man’s Land” is like the poor, always with you. Obviously you can’t live with the Germans; there must be some space between. This may be quite a small area; just a common bit of ground, but it has all the mystery of

the Sahara Desert. Strange things happen in "No Man's Land" at night time. One sees it by day; not a movement—a few uniforms that used to contain men lying about—a few ditches perhaps full of similar uniforms—a mass of barbed wire, a few stumps of willow trees; and at parts, long dark masses or rank, growing grass. Perhaps there are the ruins of an old farmhouse, now just a few bricks. Yet the place, sometimes not much bigger than a fair-sized garden, is of vital interest to both your side and the other side. At night time the place is alive with men crawling about in the centre, others mending wire, and yourself crouching in the listening post.

I remember going along the trenches at about midnight and meeting a fellow I knew at Cambridge, and after having a glass of port with him in his dugout, going out to visit one of his men in the listening post. We crept through a sally port in





#### GAS MASKS FOR ALL

Four of this family group are soldiers, but the others, even the little tot, carry masks in their pockets and at the signal they put them on to ward off the asphyxiating gases



the trench, and then walked along the borrow ditch, I'll tell you what a borrow ditch is in a minute, and then after turning at right angles along the shallow ditch we found a youth of about eighteen crouching down with his rifle ready. He had a sort of nest hollowed out and his rifle resting on two or three sandbags in front of him. My friend asked him a few questions, and he told him something about transport wheels that he had heard, and then we left him alone. Duty in a listening post may be interesting, though it is not a very nice job; still it is quite an ordinary experience in the trenches. The object is to give quick warning of the approach of hostile patrols, raids, and worse still, of poisonous gas. Gas emission can be heard. Also, information can be gleaned about the movement of troops just behind the trenches, whether enemy troops are being relieved or not. You will find that your officers will want to know a great deal

about all sorts of little things. Little bits of information put together make something for the staff people to work upon. Obviously it must be as accurate as possible, not imaginary. You'll find it difficult not to imagine quite a lot. The result of your work will appear in reports issued to men of your Army Corps. You must never let a hostile patrol get within bomb throwing distance of you, or you are done. You have also an important duty to perform in keeping the men in the trenches safe from surprise attacks.

It is important that you should not carry anything on you that will be of interest to the enemy. They will always try, if possible, to take you alive, though this is difficult; it will depend upon the amount of barbed wire around you. If they get you in their trench, they will pump you by fair means or foul, but generally by fair means, to get as much information as possible. However, you will be told all about this.

Now patrols go out every night under a junior officer, generally below the rank of captain. Sometimes a good N.C.O. takes charge. I was building two gun emplacements in the front parapet with some engineers, and a working party of my own men. I had dined with the C.O., who was a Captain Walton, an exceedingly brave officer after breakfast, and as brave as a lion after supper. He seemed to enjoy patrols. Walton was a member of a very ancient English family. He had been an officer in a good regiment, but evidently desired to roam. The war found him in New Zealand, gum digging. He was going outside for some reason or other and asked me to go with him. It was not my business to patrol with him, chiefly because I had about twenty men working for me, and there was really no point in going out. However, it is the nightly performance of an Infantry officer, and he does not regard it as anything very special. I

must admit that I was not madly keen to go, but I found difficulty in refusing, so off we went. As soon as we got out, and to tell you the truth, it was so dark that I didn't quite know when we were out, I commenced to call myself a fool, and got cold feet. However, we did not go very far, and on the way back I discovered that I had forgotten to take my revolver with me. It was very nasty and dirty, and too dark to feel anything but stakes and mud and a few ditches; and to follow as well as possible the dark shape in front of me, which was Walton. He walked quite erect. I bent well down. As a matter of fact, the first time a fellow goes on a patrol it is very unpleasant. The men accompanying the officer are picked men. They must be fellows whom he can trust, and so it is regarded as an honor to be chosen for the job.

The first time I heard about a borrow ditch was while taking tea at a town called



Estaires. Four Infantry officers were seated at the same table. They asked me a good many questions about the work of the Artillery. One fellow who was by way of being a wit said: "In our trench we have all decided to live in the borrow, ditch. It is safer." I will have to explain this joke. In northern France and in Flanders where the trenches have to be built up from the level of the ground, a very strong parapet has to be built in front. It sometimes is as much as 30 or 40 feet thick. Now obviously the earth to form this parapet has to come from somewhere. It can't very well be taken from the trench side, so it has to be taken from the side nearer the enemy. In other words, a trench of the kind one usually thinks about when talking of trenches is dug and the earth is thrown up to form the parapet. As it is never needed for defensive purposes, its width is not a matter of any great importance, so along the front of



the parapet there is a shallow kind of lane dug. It is between the commencement of the wire entanglements and the actual trench. What the Infantry officer meant in his jeering remark was that the shooting of his Artillery had been so unsteady that shells were constantly dropping in the trench proper, and that therefore it was safer for him to spend his day in the borrow ditch. The name is really suggestive. The earth is borrowed and then thrown up to form the parapet. In winter the borrow ditch is little more than a quagmire. Still, at night time, it is very much peopled by men mending wire. There are often little tunnels dug in the parapet leading into the borrow ditch, and quite often people go into it by day. This is more possible in the summer when the grass grows very high, and the wind disturbing it, naturally movement is seldom detected. However, you will know all about borrow ditches before you are fin-

ished. Perhaps you will call them by another name. I don't suppose that the Infantry officer was really serious, but was merely jeering at my arm of the service. As a matter of fact, however, it is not a very difficult thing for a shell coming from a high-velocity gun to hit the parapet of its own trench. This happens quite often when the trenches, Allied and German, are close together.

I remember standing by a sally port one night in the trenches, and a shape crept in from outside. At first I thought it must be a German, but soon it turned into an old Tommy. He was a corporal whom I knew, and upon being asked where he had been, he said that he had been out to hear the Germans sing. "Lord, they do sing lovely," he said. I was astonished that a man should risk his life just to hear the Germans sing, and then he pointed out to me that I was standing on the fire step with my head above the parapet, which

he thought more dangerous than going outside. Opinions differ on this point. As he said, "If I have my 'ead above the parapet and get shot I go to 'ell; if I get scuppered out in 'No Man's Land' I go to 'blighty'."\* He meant that if one got shot out in "No Man's Land" there was a reasonable chance of getting a body wound, but with your head above the parapet, the chance of getting your head blown off was likely. A little illogical, this, but there is a shade of sense about it. As a matter of fact, at night time people mostly ignore the parapet, except as a quick way of getting along the trench without trail-

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\* When a British soldier gets a wound that will assure him a rest in a hospital and possibly a visit to England and home he has got a "Blighty." I hope I have spelled correctly. Most British soldiers spent part of their service in India. The Hindustani word for England sounds like "Blighty." Hence when they return to England from India they return to "Blighty." That is the only explanation I know and I won't vouch for its accuracy.

ing through the mud. Frankly, it seems better to me to walk along the trench and tumble down a hundred times, than to walk along the top of the parapet.

Still, we all do it; and so will you.

Some men enjoy patrols, in fact, I think that most of them do. An officer having the responsibility does not like it very much, but one sees the men before going out quite happy and a little excited about it. I overheard three talking one day when I was observing the German trench opposite, and one said: "Jerry went out on patrol last night for the first time; he brought in three shell noses and a scull." The Tommy spoke as though Jerry had gone to a music hall the night before and had enjoyed it. The thing on patrol is to be as careful and as quiet as possible. There are, of course, German patrols about. Everything depends upon the object of the patrol. It may be to find out something about a ditch. It may be

merely a defensive bit of work; your wire may have been cut and you want advance information of any likely raids. You may be going to bomb an enemy listening post. This is exciting and fruitful. The thing is to attend carefully to orders. Carelessness on your part will kill every man with you. Watch out for German star shells, or Very's lights, as we call them. As soon as the shell leaves the pistol (it does not light up the country at once), fall down or stand perfectly still and you won't be seen. If, however, it is coming straight over you, fall down or else you will be silhouetted against its glare. At first on a patrol you will go about with your head bent down, finally you will walk in an ordinary way. Of course, when close to the German trench you will creep. The whole thing seems to be arranged on a definite scheme. The officer goes in the centre and is guarded in front and rear, and sometimes at the side by a bomber. He is armed with a good re-

volver, and may even carry a bomb. He will give directions before leaving and will also have a prearranged sign for movements. Once more you will have to be very careful. Frankly, as an Artillery officer, it has never been my duty to lead a patrol. What I am telling you has been gleaned from friends in the Infantry. I know this, however, that if you go on patrol with an officer you are one of his very best men, and will be well instructed in your duties.

As a forward observing Artillery officer visiting perhaps several companies of Infantry, one has many chances for observing conditions. Also, one goes down to the trenches a great deal, escaping, however, the more extreme discomforts.

## CHAPTER IX

### GAS AND OTHER FANCIES

THE poor devils holding the trenches at Ypres one day saw heavy clouds of vapor arising from the enemy's trenches in front of them. The wind being favorable, it came slowly on and finally they breathed it. After a time they were mostly dead, and the Germans ceasing to emit gas, found little difficulty in getting through the wire and advancing over thousands of dead or dying British, Canadians, and Frenchmen. Many, of course, lived, and there are wonderful tales of heroism. It is almost too horrible to write about! Just imagine having to fight a man with his hands tied. One almost pities the German soldier. However, as the enemy advanced, they began to find men who had failed to die, although dying. Their hands





#### READY FOR GAS

They are crossing a dangerous zone near Chemin des Dames—all animals in use behind and within the lines are provided with protective coverings



were not tied. They could breathe a little, they could fight, and they did. The Artillery were still in action, too, and the forward observation officers, tying wet handkerchiefs round their mouths, directed the fire. Had the Germans succeeded in killing, by decent means, the same number of men, the war would probably have been over—at any rate, Calais would now be in the hands of the Germans—but the devil, their master, could not imbue them with the courage of decent soldiers. They feared the wind would change; they failed to advance, although it was easy.

Of course, in a very short time all the British and French were supplied with some sort of mask to protect them, and the danger, in a large sense, was over. Gas emission, never a great success, is now a normal method of warfare. Two gas helmets are supplied to each man. They are kept in a neat wallet, and are carried slung over the shoulder. They are changed

at regular intervals, and are supposed to be inspected daily. Don't lose your gas mask or keep a pair of socks in it, like the fellow in the *London Punch* story. You may escape an attack for months and then get caught. There are always gas cylinders somewhere about, either in your trench or in the enemy's, and a shell or bullet may burst them—so take great care of the mask.

Of course, there are very often false gas alarms, but, thank goodness, the stuff will only come over when the wind is favorable, so when you get an alarm, and the wind is unfavorable, the chances are that it is false. However, as gas does its work very quickly, it is my advice to you not to take too many chances. There is no point in running, for the gas will spread quicker than you can run up a communication trench. It is said that a little relief can be got by wetting your handkerchief and placing it over your mouth. If,

however, you have your masks this will be unnecessary—*don't take your mask wallet off your shoulder and don't leave it on the ground and forget it when you are working behind the lines on a hot day with your coat off.* Gas may arrive that night.

I was working in the trenches one night when there was a gas alarm, and I saw a young officer go rushing down the trench yelling to some one to give him a mask "for the love of God." He was a bit hysterical. I got my mask out and commenced to put it on and smelt something nasty and felt duly thrilled, and a little scared, for I had twenty gunners working with me and we were unarmed except for my revolver. It was in the early days of the war, and the Artillery could not be spared many rifles. A strategic retreat seemed the best thing for myself and gunners in the event of an attack, for we would merely be in the way, and I had no desire

to have my perfectly good gunners captured without a chance to fight. In any case, I had little faith in their shooting with rifles. My sergeant, too, would have been difficult for he had expressed the intention of returning to England with the Victoria Cross. He would have fought the nearest Infantry soldier for his rifle, and I am sure would have made himself a nuisance. He did, as it was, for while working the night before, and during my absence, he had borrowed a rifle from the sentry near and had commenced blazing away at the German parapet. Unfortunately, the trench at this point was forced back by a salient in the German line. This salient formed a kind of elbow, and our trench went straight at the side of this elbow, and then stopped almost in the air. For a few yards the trench that we were in ran parallel to this part; obviously, care was needed in firing from our part in case the sentries in the other should receive

bullets in their backs. Later I was in the officers' dugout, and the young subaltern in command of the trench that approached the German salient entered and said that he did not expect to have any men left at all unless the people in our part of the trench showed a little more care. None of them had been really hurt, but bullets had been whizzing past their ears. I blushed for my sergeant, but had not the heart to tell him what he had been doing. I merely forbade him to shoot, and told the sentry near not to lend him his rifle. You see, that sergeant wanted the Victoria Cross badly.

There were no opportunities for heroism during the week we were working in the trench, and as we returned one night to the battery, and thank heaven it was the last night, my sergeant said sadly, "Well, Sir, if a general was to come up to one of mymen and say ' 'ere's the V.C., I'd shake 'is 'and and say, 'Well done, lad!' For, Sir, it ain't the best men wot gits the



honners.” He was a wonderful sergeant, that, a product of Kitchener’s army—it would have been difficult to find a better one among the regulars.

But owing to his purely Artillery training he would have been a nuisance if the Bosches had attacked with gas that night. It proved to be a false alarm, and the scent I had smelt was my own gas mask, being unfolded and coming straight from the wallet. A man in a listening post reported that he had seen something green, and had given the gas signal.

When gas is emitted one can never be sure what the Bosches are going to do. Sometimes they send gas over merely to use it up in order to have empty cylinders for fresh poison of a new nature; sometimes they will merely use it as the preliminary to a raid or small attack. Once my division was given a large number of these gas cylinders to emit for this latter purpose. The gas arrived about two weeks

before we were due to go back into reserve for rest and recuperation; we were at first interested and decided to have a good "strafe." Unfortunately, you cannot take this poison up to the trenches like a barrel of water, as its contents might be punctured by a bullet. This is awkward and everybody gets uncomfortable. Hence the matter must be thought out carefully. Possibly the Artillery are warned not to disturb the Germans too much and even the Infantry may be told to avoid too much sniping, and endeavor to lull the Bosches to sleep. I doubt their being much deceived, but I am sure they enjoy the rest.

Finally the day arrives when the confounded stuff has to be taken down to the trenches. It is like a military ceremony or a wedding. Certain gentlemen are given the honor of carrying the cylinders. They don't enjoy it, but, getting their masks on, start off. Orders have been issued to all the troops for a long distance

around that this procession will start at a certain time. They are notified that certain gas cylinders are going up, and that a bugle will give some sort of warning, in the event of a puncture. Can you imagine it? That solemn procession of muddy Tommies solemnly carrying those kegs, preceded and followed by a bugler, carrying death and horribleness in some common-looking kegs. So they stumble along up the communication trench, round the dizzies, over the trench boards that are like long, narrow, flat spiders with wobbling legs, and finally they arrive at the front line. No one is pleased to see the stuff—the real anxiety starts. The cylinders are fixed, and they require some fixing, in a certain way near the parapet. A strong part of the parapet is obviously chosen and they are protected as well as possible. There they wait for the wind, and it must be a permanent sort of wind, none of your light, zephyry, flippant

winds, but a good, steady breeze, not too strong; the sort that makes things perfectly fine on a hot day, the sort that a yachtsman likes to have when he is running free. Now it is quite useless to let off gas without the aid of Artillery to make things unpleasant after the gas emission, even if you are not going to attack. So the Artillery have to be organized, and this takes possibly a little time. Also, the wind must be blowing well at the right hour, and in warfare it is a tradition always to attack just before dawn. It is an awkward time, as man is said to be at his lowest then. Often all will be ready and the wind will change ten minutes before the moment set for the emission. Then we in the Artillery say "curse," and go back to bed, and the men say "curse" and feel in a bad temper all the next day.

For weeks the wind refused to blow in the direction we wanted it to blow. No one could get away to have lunch or tea at A—— or E——. I know one In-

fantry officer who risked it and was having tea and talking French to the young lady in the tea shop when some one mentioned casually that the wind was just fine for the ——— Division's gas attack. He became panicky and rushed for his pony. He had ten miles or more to go, and he shuddered to think what would happen. As he rode along, he thought of his past life, and remembered how often he had been late for things, for lectures at the university, for weddings not his own, for dinner parties, but never had he been late for a battle. There was a certain thrill about this—to be late for a battle. It sounded interesting and a certain whimsical satisfaction took possession of his mind. He was nearly late and would have been quite so if the wind had not shown signs of changing.

Finally, the day arrived for us to go into reserve, so we kindly offered a legacy of several drums of gas to the relieving

division. While thanking us for our generosity they declined, and wrote letters about it. We were told then to take the gas with us and have our "strafe" upon our return. We then also wrote letters and finally it was decided to wait for the wind. It came one glorious evening, and we got ready. It was a frosty night, not very cold, however, but very clear. A fine full moon seemed to be rushing across the sky and the stars were fairly blazing. I was called at an unpleasant hour, and finding my way over to the guns saw that all was ready. My sergeants were both happy. I remember noticing how tidy everything was in the gun pits, the guns polished and clean, a lantern was burning and I noticed how bright the hat badges and buttons looked on the men. They seemed a little excited and very happy. They were going to give the Bosche a little of his own medicine, and were pleased about it. The moment arrived. With another officer I

was up a large tripod where we could see the trenches. We could see the German flares sailing gracefully up in the air like beautiful snowballs. A few machine guns were tapping and a rifle occasionally rang out. Then the moment arrived.

I have never been quite sure whether I could see that gas or not. It is easy to imagine things at the front. However, there seemed to be a large white billow or cloud rolling clumsily over to the German trenches. They sent up colored rockets, and commenced waving burning straw and paper at the parapet. The colored rockets were the German S.O.S., but their gunners must have been asleep for they did not fire for nearly half an hour.

We in the Artillery remained silent until the gas had been all emitted, but around us there were many guns, each with a good store of shell ready to let loose. We let them go at the right moment, and then there was a glorious noise. Modern



warfare has little that is romantic about it, but when your side gets up a good Artillery bombardment it is quite thrilling. You don't seem to mind the retaliation chiefly because you don't hear the shells until they burst, and if you are alive and well you are safe. It is the sound of the shell coming that gives one the jumps.

We did not do very much that night. We did not want to. In any case, the Bosche put a perfectly good searchlight on the wire we had cut, so the colonel decided that it would be a useless sacrifice of men.

We were glad to get rid of that gas, and the next day we started to pack up for our month of reserve.

You have possibly often heard that the essence of a successful attack is surprise. During the day under normal conditions the Germans and the British, except for Artillery fire, seldom do much fighting, but

at night anything is liable to happen. Now both sides endeavor to prevent surprises by keeping "No Man's Land" as much alight as possible. Sometimes you will see searchlights, but obviously these are very easily attacked by Artillery fire. The searchlights that are used are never the permanent kind that one sees on an ordinary fortification, but of a sort probably run up and down on a small trolley line. Both sides send up what appear to be rockets, although they are not really rockets. The Germans seem to have developed this much more than their enemies. In the British army we call them Very's lights. They are fired from a pistol with a barrel about an inch in diameter. They look rather like the old-fashioned pistol that one sometimes sees in curiosity shops. The lights they give are very beautiful, but somehow do not seem to be as great a success as one would expect them to be. They light up the coun-

try for about two square miles, and, in fact, the Artillery and transport wagons behind find them very useful. When, however, you are within a few hundred yards of them the glare is so great that it almost blinds you. They seem to be called "star shells." They start off with a hissing sound and very little light, but when they have got half way up they seem to unfold and suggest to one's mind beautiful white lilies. When they get as far as they are going they seem to linger, hang in the air for a second, and then float gracefully down, lighting up the country for miles. It is a fortunate thing that one gets a certain amount of warning, and the necessary steps can be taken for self-preservation. As I have already said, it is important that a fellow in "No Man's Land" should stand perfectly still or fall down if there is time. However, if they show signs of falling directly behind you, you will be silhouetted a black shape against

the white light, and consequently a pretty good target.

It seemed to me one of the most beautiful things in the world to climb a tall tree and look for miles along the trenches, seeing nothing else but these beautiful lights floating in the air. I remember the first time I saw one. I was going up to my battery position at night, and I saw what appeared to be a beautiful luminous snow-ball sailing towards me, and then gradually dropping among the trees, out of sight.

But Very's lights will be very common things to you before you are finished, and I do not suppose they will be a cause of worry if you remember to take precautions. Of course, if one hits you on the head when it is coming down it might burn or bruise you.

Actually, before being fired, the lights look something like a small candle wrapped up in paper. The Germans seem

to fire them from their borrow ditches. We also follow a like practice, but as our lights are not as good as theirs, we sometimes venture a little farther out into "No Man's Land."

I remember once being down in the trenches at night sitting in the officers' mess dugout. I saw on the wall four of these pistols. I asked the officer what they were; he told me they were Very's light pistols. I expressed a wish to fire one of them, imagining that it would merely mean letting off the thing from the fire trench. I followed the officer out of the dugout, and in a few minutes found myself crawling through the barbed wire entanglements in front of the trench. We got out about twenty-five yards and were roughly about fifty yards from the German trench. We crept along an old ditch which was full of mud and water. The officer whispered that he would count three and when he got to three we should all fire. There were

five of us altogether, hence five lights would fly up. It seemed a little bit crude to me. The officer also whispered that it would be a good idea to crouch down into the ditch the moment we had fired the pistols, because, as he explained, we would be sure to draw a burst of machine-gun fire. He counted three and whizz—up went the lights into the air. There were no results, so the officer whispered that we would fire another salvo. It seemed to me that I had had quite enough experience, but, however, I loaded my pistol again, and once more we fired. The result this time was astonishing. The German sentry in a rather frightened voice yelled out, "Don't you come over 'ere." It was spoken in perfect "cockney." I suppose the German had been a waiter in London. We obeyed him and returned to our trench. Moral: Don't be too curious about strange looking weapons in the trenches.

The Germans sometimes send a curious

shell, which, after bursting, spreads a gas in the air which has the effect of making a man's eyes water. They water so much that it is impossible to see, and consequently impossible to point a gun accurately. They are called lacrymatory shells; by the Tommies, weeping shells. The effect does not appear to be very painful. Even several hours after the shell has exploded the gas seems to linger in the air. Spectacles are supplied to the people who are likely to suffer. They do not worry the Infantry very much, and this is obvious, as the trenches are so close and the wind so uncertain that Fritz himself would be affected. For this reason they are generally fired at the Artillery. It is an irregular method of warfare and consequently has its shortcomings.

I remember once the Germans spread a thick white vapor for miles round the country. It seemed to fall on us like a cloud. It smelt just a little, but was



quite harmless. It is difficult to see the object of covering the country with smoke, because if their movements are hidden from you, your movements will also be hidden from them. Still, it is used sometimes, so expect it. In fact, as both sides are looking for some invention that will remove what appears to be the stalemate of trench warfare, you may expect anything.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FOUR-LEGGED RECRUIT

THERE is another recruit from America who will find himself on the battlefield, but who will dislike it intensely. It is impossible to give the horse tips, but a few can be given to you that will help him a great deal.

A very large number of horses are lost and suffer on the battlefield, though the percentage of deaths from bullet and shell wounds is comparatively small. The little diseases that attack a horse become irritated and through the absence of a stable or loose box where he can be looked after it is sometimes impossible to save him. A large number break down and indeed die from sheer neglect and careless handling. A horse is really a very delicate animal. A bad cold often ends his usefulness, if

neglected. A cold becomes tubercular very rapidly and then he is finished. Now you can do much to save him if you will attend to a few little tips. Incidentally you will get fond of him in time, and doubtless will worry more about his health than about your own. Some of you may be used to the care of horses, and can therefore miss this chapter or enjoy finding out where I am wrong. These days the average man's experience of a horse is limited. One is used mostly to seeing a sturdy animal drawing a tradesman's cart. He is nicely kept and sleek looking. Sometimes one sees a horse drawing an old cart in such a condition that it is a wonder the owner isn't put under arrest for disgusting cruelty. However, the general impression we mostly have is that the horse is a living automobile engine, who if well supplied with corn instead of gasoline, carries on well enough. But follow the tradesman home after he has finished his day's

work, and you will find a very nice clean stable with plenty of straw awaiting the horse. You will notice that the horse is well rubbed down, looked after generally, watered, and well fed. Quite possibly, some of the children will bring him out some sugar. You will notice the stable is well ventilated. Under these conditions a horse will continue to keep in good health, and very little trouble is experienced in looking after him and keeping him fit.

Now on service all this is changed, conditions are very irritating. One day he will have to work tremendously, and then perhaps for weeks he will have practically no work at all. Sometimes he will have a sheltered stable; sometimes he will spend nights out in the rain and mud. It is only by the most careful looking after by officers and men that a horse's life is bearable at all.

Now at times you will get orders from your officers in regard to the horse. They

will all have studied the question thoroughly, and many will have read General Carter's fine work on the horse, "Horses, Saddles, and Bridles."

You might get that book if you have the chance; it is good reading.

I am going to try and explain a few little things that may make the obedience of orders easier. For when a man understands an order, obedience is a simple matter.

If you are a Cavalry or Artillery recruit, your first experience of the horse may be a little comical. The mounts used in a riding school are very experienced and ignore you, attending rather to the riding master who has them well under control. Don't be surprised at what one of these horses may do; at any rate, you are quite safe. The line to follow is to pretend that you are perfectly happy. You won't be. But pretend. If you show fear, or worse still, irritation, you'll pay heavily

for every sign of fear and very heavily for every sign of irritation. Riding masters are pretty fierce customers. They like the horses much more than they will ever like you. The object of the lessons are twofold: first, to give you a good seat so that you won't topple off at the wrong moment; secondly, to give the horse a good and kindly rider.

I am going to talk to you about the second objective. Once more you have got to think. The first thing to rid your mind of is that the horse enjoys having you on his back, for some horses hate it intensely, and take the necessary steps to remove you. Often they will succeed.

The other thing of which you must rid your mind is that you look very fine on the horse. You are not nearly so nice looking as is the horse, and indeed, he looks much better without you. But still, if you insist on looking fine and enjoy looking fine, the only thing to do is to make

the horse as happy as possible under the circumstances. He will respond, not necessarily because he loves you (you've got to win his love, it is very easy and worth the effort), but because he has been in the stable and enjoys getting out; although the silly old fellow, after he has removed you, will rush with a squeak and heels in the air right back to his stable. If you are an ass you will thrash him for this, and if he has a nasty temper, the next time he removes you before returning to the stable he may bite and kick you.

You will find in the riding school that the riding master will almost at the beginning make you ride without reins. The horses are trained, and will continue to encircle the school quite nicely. The thing to do is to grip your knees well round the gee. He doesn't mind a bit as long as your knees grip him and not your heels, upon which he suspects the existence of spurs.

Once more look as if you liked it. Some-



times the horse, possibly at a sign from the master, will give a little bound into the air; if you have those knees of yours tight, you will keep your seat, and the riding master will not bother you again.

The next fearful thing is when you get the order to quit stirrups. This is horrible, and visions of supper on the mantelpiece sweep before your eyes. It is going to be hard, but the longer you look as if you hated it, the longer the instructor will keep you there. As soon as a man looks happy and unruffled and seems to have a good grip, the sergeant will order him to retake his stirrups. You'll get a lot of riding without stirrups. Grip with your knees tight, and sit well into the saddle, and, above all, have a sunny disposition shining from your face. If you groan and grumble, or show signs of mutiny, look out. It is not advisable.

When you have to ride with neither stirrups nor reins, the whole thing is awful.

But get it over, and you will soon pass out of the riding school.

Now the object of all this training is more for the comfort of the horse than for you.

When you can ride well and without reins, and at first you will miss them (a sign that you cannot ride really), you will find that when you get the reins again you won't bear on them or tug them unless necessary. People who have done little riding, and some indeed, who have done a lot, depend a great deal upon the reins to keep them on their horse. The horse has a sensitive mouth, and these are the people who produce hard mouths, and what is called "spoilt mouths." So in the army, it is the object of every horse master and indeed, every officer to produce what is called "good hands" among his men. If you have "good hands," and they are not easy to develop, you will find them a great asset. You will have a lot of

capital upon which you can draw, for instance, to hold a horse in easily, or to stop him suddenly. It will be a great help in your riding, because nothing is more uncomfortable than all the time to be hanging on to a horse who wants to thrust himself forward.

Riding without stirrups is to give you a secure seat. Without stirrups you naturally seek the most comfortable position, and consequently tend to fall in, as much as possible, with the motion of the horse. This helps a little, and will prevent saddle galls and sore withers produced by a bad rider as well as by an old saddle. Still, it is a pretty nasty business altogether, these first days in the riding school, so pass out as soon as you possibly can. Having passed out of riding school, if you are an Artillery driver or a trooper, you will be given a horse or horses. They are your own. Look them well over and see what can be done. There is an awful lot.

At first you will think them rather rotten, but in a few weeks' time, if you are useful with your fists, no one else will dare to say a word against them. Perhaps you will find yourself down at the stable at nighttime having a yarn and seeing that they are well bedded down for the night, or that the driver of the horse next to yours hasn't pinched all the straw.

You have all heard of Robert Burns, the Scotch poet—he is said to have been a bit fond of wild parties, but he was very much a man. He started life as a ploughman in Scotland, and Carlisle, a famous English writer once said that Burns was the finest gentleman in Europe. Most people have read his little poem "To a Mouse":

Wee, sleekit, couring, tim'rous beastie,  
 Oh, what a panic's in thy breastie!  
 Thou need na start awa sae hastie.  
     Wi bickerin brattle!  
 I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee  
     Wi' murd'rin pattle!

He could see much to admire and love, even in a mouse, and though you will hate



A STABLE BEHIND THE LINES

A cleverly concealed shelter for the houses of a 75 Battery at Beauseijon, Flanders





mice very thoroughly when you are finished with this war, you will be no less a man in loving your horse.

I had a Welsh miner of the roughest kind in my battery called Jones. He had a fine flow of language. It was pretty strong. He always seemed to be destroying the beauty of his friends, but he seemed to lavish all that was best in his nature on his two horses. Even in winter when the coats of the horses at the front became very thick and untidy, his horse always looked smart and clean. Other horses died, got kicked, or were cast, but never Jones's. His horses were the wheelers of the gun, and in moments of emergency they were always to be depended upon. On long marches, there are always several horses who drop out through exhaustion, but these two wheelers were always there, calm and collected, fat and sleek, going along steadily. It was not chance by any means that produced this result. Jones was a miner, and had had no experience



with horses, but he had, however, a great big heart and loved his horses more than he loved himself. He was also a little proud of having the best in the section. His harness was always soft and the steel work was polished like silver. The brass buttons on his tunic were bright as well as his hat badge. He did not want to spoil the look of the turn-out. You will meet many drivers like Jones. They are very valuable.

The following remarks are primarily meant for Artillery drivers and gunners.

When a battery receives orders to be at a certain place at a certain hour, it must be there as completely as possible. A battery may consist of 250 men with the same number of horses. Obviously the organization that keeps such a force in an efficient state must be intricate, although it is made as simple as possible.

Towards the soldier a constant stream is

always flowing from the base. Underwear, trousers, puttees, caps, boots, and socks, all wear out quickly on service. Food must also come every day. At the front, bread even is supplied; dainties in the way of raisins, prunes, dates, and lots of little things; sometimes even candy is supplied.

A similar stream, though simpler, runs towards the horse; picketting ropes, head ropes, medical supplies, rugs in winter; harness and saddlery, brushes and an immense supply of food.

The postal service must also be kept going.

When the battery moves off from a bivouac or billet, all these channels of supply must be kept open. When two or three hundred men settle down for a few days they are apt to spread themselves a little. Every inch of equipment has its place on the transport wagons, gun limbers and caissons.

During training time there will be a good deal of drill in packing everything up tightly. The loss of the tiniest bit of equipment causes discomfort to some one, often to all. During drill after you have started on a march fully equipped, the whole turn-out will be rigidly inspected, and trouble awaits the man who has failed to tie everything on tightly. You may then do some trotting over rough country and the trail of the battery will be watched closely.

If you ever have the luck to march behind a badly disciplined battery, you will find many useful things on the ground, canvass water buckets, nosebags, mess tins, almost anything; even knapsacks containing perhaps a bible, a few letters and spare underclothing. With difficulty the knapsacks will be returned to their owners, but you won't return the other things as they are fair spoil.

It is, therefore, very advisable to know

where everything is placed, and to tie it there firmly. It is on an occasion like this that a Non-Commissioned Officer will prove himself.

A battery works strictly to time. Therefore an N.C.O. must judge correctly how long it will take to get moving. If he is wise he will endeavor to leave one-half hour margin at the end. If drill is attended to carefully, and each man knows his work, it will be comparatively simple. It means tidyness of mind. Some N.C.O.'s rush hither and thither looking wild, cursing everyone and doing half the work themselves. Incidentally an N.C.O. should never work with his hands except when instructing or under special circumstances. An officer may work occasionally; seldom an N.C.O. Finally, after much row and excitement, perhaps, the column will move off. A weight will be removed from everyone's mind and the battery will be at the rendezvous where you meet the rest of

your brigade in good time. Now comes the point. It is essential that every horse, every carriage, should arrive at its destination at the same time. Of course, accidents occur.

On a long march you will never move out of a good walk. This will be the intention, based on knowledge and experience, of your commanding officer. But certain N.C.O.'s will foil him in this laudable purpose.

All horses cannot walk at the same rate, so the C.O. in front will choose a walk suitable to the slowest horse. This is obvious.

Now some horses are lazy, also some drivers, and their teams will slowly but surely make the distance between their team and the carriage in front too great. It may get to twenty yards. A fault has been committed here. First, by the drivers in not making their horses walk out, sec-

ondly, by the N.C.O. in not insisting upon their walking out.

The N.C.O. may order the team to trot up into place. The team behind will then have to trot double the distance and the horses at the very end of the column may have to gallop. It is a case of compound interest. This is very bad for all and results in certain horses falling out with exhaustion and their carriage getting lost, certainly losing its place in its own section. The real remedy for lost space is always to make the horses walk out well. This can be done without making them jog. There are halts every now and then during which time the wagon can advance sedately up into its place if it has fallen behind. If a horse shows signs of exhaustion, and these are easily detected, if you are an N.C.O., change him. Put one of your signallers' horses or one of your spares in his place for a few hours.

The important thing is to see that the work of dividing the labor is perfected.

Watch the traces in front of you if you are a centre or wheel driver. If they hang in festoons the pair in front are slacking. Everything will depend on the N.C.O. in charge keeping his eyes open.

It is important to see that your horses are well watered on the march. At the end of every hour, there is a ten minute halt. Your part of the column may be near a creek, pond or well, and in this case the horses can be easily watered, but in many another there will be no water about. Therefore, during the many little halts on the way, the men riding on caissons should have a bucket ready to run into the nearest house to get some water. This can be worked out easily, and you must remember that nothing is better for the horse than plenty of water. It is a fallacy to believe that to water a horse when hot and sweating is fatal for him. He'd never get watered on service at all, if this were true.



When watering a horse during these short halts don't take his bit out. The order to march comes quickly, and you've got to get that bit in again. It may be difficult, and meanwhile the team in front has moved forward and you will delay the whole column.

Marching becomes weary work, and there will be a good long halt for feeding yourself and horses. If the cooks are well trained and decent fellows, they will soon have coffee or tea ready, and there will be plenty of time to run into the nearest store and buy things. This is possible during the midday halt. Don't do it without permission during the hourly halt. It makes such a scramble to get back, and you'll have to run to catch up with your column.

On the march, things will be as easy and comfortable as possible. You may sing, and better still, smoke to your heart's content, even though sitting on a caisson full

of H.E. It is sealed pretty tight so there is little need for worry. Of course, it may be different in your army, but in my battery on the march the men could do what they pleased within reason. *They could always smoke.*

If every man uses his brains a little, refusing to be a serf, but remembering that he is an important part of the battery, things will go very smoothly.

If you can remember the tips about the horses, they are important, and the remarks about fixing equipments, at the end of the march all will go smoothly and you'll soon be dismissed for the night. There will be the proper number of picketing ropes, there will be enough head ropes and enough water buckets, but if these things have been lost the work will be doubled, and the whole night will be spent muddling, the sergeant swearing, the men getting upset and dismissal postponed. It is all quite simple and it is you

—the soldier—who can make things easy.

All these remarks are based upon experience, and I predict that the best part of your nature will sympathize with the six horses drawing you along. They get very hot and tired, more tired than you will. There is so much that is fine in a good horse. He hates war more than you do. 'All I have told you here can be found in a drill book, but for your own sake, I want to rub it in.

At the front the horses of the battery are kept well back, generally out of the range of the ordinary gun. Unfortunately, in Northern France and Flanders the ground gets very wet and muddy, and it is almost impossible to make the horses anywhere near comfortable during the winter months. Of course, we try very hard and endeavor to steal all the material possible to give them some sort of shelter, but to make an adequate shelter for nearly 200 horses without any material to speak of

except what we can pick up is very difficult. However, we try. We get all the bricks possible from the ruins around, and endeavor to make firm standings for the horses, but even with plenty of bricks, the mud oozes through, and the place is very nasty and damp. My battery sent back a large number of wagons to a forest near, and there got masses of saplings and brushwood. With these we tried to make good shelters for the horses. The great difficulty was the roof. We tried in a poor sort of way to thatch it with straw, but it leaked hopelessly. We could not get enough straw.

Although in France the climate is never very cold, it makes up for this by drizzling for days and days. The lot of the average horse becomes almost unbearable, so we try our hardest to train the men to look after them with care. Mud abscesses are very prevalent, and all sorts of little complaints develop. The horses grow

hair like the fleece of the sheep ; sometimes it is four inches long, and one result is that lice abound. You will have to watch out for this very carefully because nothing makes a horse more uncomfortable than the constant irritation caused by the bites of these insects. The thing to do is to report the matter as soon as possible to the sergeant. There is much that you can do yourself to make the horses comfortable. Even if it is impossible for the battery as a whole to supply adequate cover for the horses, there will be a lot of little things that you can do yourself. I hope you will think it over very carefully. In spite of what one hears and imagines the horse is still an important member of a division, and deserves, from both the military and Christian viewpoint, careful looking after.

Never trot too fast at the front, especially in France. Nothing is worse for a horse than to trot at a quick rate on a

hard road on service. Of course, he will want to go fast. To you it seems that he is enjoying himself, and indeed, he may be, but take it from me, there is nothing worse for him in the world. Another thing that is very bad for a horse during service is to canter him on a hard road, indeed, on anything but a grass track. I know you will see people doing it and people who ought to know better, but ask one of your mounted officers in the regular army and he will tell you. If there is one thing a mounted regular officer does know well it is horse management. A battery with good horses always seems to do the best shooting. This is denied by the officers in heavy Artillery units, but it is a safe thing to put your money on the battery with good, fat, clean animals.

## CHAPTER XI

### A CURSE OF WAR

DURING your service at the front you will most certainly get an opportunity to visit London or Paris, as such visits are generally easily arranged. They always seemed to discourage our visiting Paris. I expect you will mostly find yourself in London, where you will feel more at home and will probably meet more friends. I would like to give you a few straight tips. These tips will apply to more than one part of England, and theoretically to France.

Near Cambridge, the University town in England, there are several large hospitals well out in the country. I believe there are three. One is close to a village called Cherry Hinton, a very pretty name—but the men in these hospitals are not



suffering from wounds inflicted by the Germans, nor has their disease been caused by exposure to all sorts of weather. They seem very healthy and well, and they all look thoroughly decent fellows. An old lecturer friend of mine is one of the chaplains, and during my leave from the front I went out to see him. We walked through the enormous encampment and saw scores of Tommies from every part of the world. The thing that struck me most was the innocence displayed in their faces. Some, of course, looked rough necks and pretty nasty, but the great majority were very young and good looking. One learns to size up a soldier and I must admit that these fellows looked the very best type. There were sentries round this hospital and a guard at the gate. The men went out for walks accompanied by a chaplain. One chaplain took a party into Cambridge and they had tea there, but the beautiful souls of the townsmen of Cambridge were

shocked and letters were written to the papers—the walks were then confined to the country. Men stay but a month in this hospital yet it is always full. I noticed that the men were fine physical specimens, the sorts of fellows whose children would be a credit to any nation. However, through carelessness, inexperience, sometimes mere viciousness, often through loneliness, they had pretty successfully managed to turn themselves into social lepers. The whole thing is pretty rotten for everybody.

In England we all love the fellows who are fighting for our country, and we want to make them as happy as possible, especially while they are home. You will admit that it is a little difficult for us in regard to the fellows in the hospital near Cherry Hinton. Of course, you know and I know, that a fellow suffering from this disease is regarded with good natured and almost admiring pity. People always give

a laugh when they talk about it. There seems something almost sporting about it. Get it yourself, however, and see how you feel! If there is anything of the man in you, you will spend some fairly uncomfortable hours thinking about it. It nearly sends some men off their heads.

When you get to England intending to spend a few cheerful days, remember that the country has been for nearly three years in the grip of a horrible war. The people have so far born it well, but war is a horrible thing, and brings all kinds of evil in its train.

When the war first broke out thousands and thousands of our best men joined up at once, and soon the country was overrun with men in khaki. There was a great burst of enthusiasm throughout the country, and the most enthusiastic were the women. Why is it that women are so keen on men in uniforms? They always are, you know.



THE AUTHOR AND JACK



The women in England were no exception. They admired and loved the soldiers: they looked so fine in their uniforms, and were they not going off to fight the Germans! Women have little of the glory of war, but have to put up with all the suffering.

And so they admired and loved the soldiers. And now comes the tragedy. Many silly girls, I am afraid many thousands, fell at once for the soldiers, and sadly enough, they have fallen very low since.

Crowds and crowds of girls found themselves earning quite large sums of money and were able to go out at night and have a good time. They were sometimes much richer than the soldiers. The men who would normally be their natural sweethearts were either called up or killed. Soldiers, perhaps, were billeted in their village for perhaps a few weeks at a time. No one really meant any harm. The girl felt patriotic and the man felt lonely, and

the rough life in the barracks made him appreciate female society—the war feeling in the air—it is the old story of every war. The girls having plenty of money had to spend it, and going to the movies and becoming romantically thrilled, it was quite easy to make friends with the soldiers present. Perhaps afterwards they went into the nearest bar—so it went—the soldier was ordered to another town, and she was left. Anyway, take it from me, and I know; England is in a pretty funny state just now. There are a fearful number of women not necessarily professional women of a certain class going about in England, who have become quite unmoral and very kindhearted.

There ought to be a big danger mark on them, but there is not. As it is, they are very engaging, for the English girl has a fine, pretty color, and she talks in a very refined way. She will naturally like you very much, and will be very sym-



pathetic. You may think yourself the only man she has ever loved. You are not. You may think she is innocent and pure. She *may* be. You must not think I am condemning my own race. If you are lucky, you will be properly introduced to many decent English girls, whom you will like very much, but the difficulty is to meet them. The girl I am warning you about is the child you may pick up, and who will tell you an innocent story of her own goodness. Poor little devil, she is having a pretty rotten time of it herself!

It may happen that you are alone in London some night, perhaps you have been alone for several days; unfortunately this is sometimes the experience of our oversea troops. The afternoon passes all right. London presents many possibilities for amusement during the day. You have dinner in a large hotel, and see crowds of other soldiers with their families burning incense to them, and you envy

them. 'After dinner you go to a theatre vainly hoping to see someone whom you know. However, as you come out feeling very lonely, longing perhaps, to get back to your friends in France, a very pretty little girl lets you know that she is willing to be friendly. You respond and take her to supper. She lets you know that she is a very straight sort of girl, and you feel very grateful for her company. In America you have learned to respect women, and you find the little lady very charming. An English woman, you know, understands the art well of making a man happy. She does not expect you to amuse her. She feels it her duty to amuse you, and she will succeed.

You go off to Brighton with her, still convinced that she is a decent girl and that this is her first escapade. At Brighton you feel a bit reckless and the damage may be done.

Now some men will regard this as a

fascinating and delightful experience, but there are many men, and you know that what I am saying is true, who definitely keep themselves straight until marriage.

You have a good time and don't think very often of the girl to whom you are engaged in America and, of course, the little English girl is really quite a nice little person. She does not swear or tell unpleasant stories. She has quite nice table manners. She doesn't ask for money, and is very grateful for presents—but if you think that you are the first man that she has lived with you are a fool. As a matter of fact, she is merely a vampire, one of a class produced by the presence in Europe of thousands of lonely soldiers with plenty of money to spend. Our home soldiers are not rich enough to attract her. If she had foul manners and a flashy appearance there would be no need to warn you about her. As it is she dresses taste-

fully and quietly, and sometimes does not even use a powder puff.

I remember at Loos, a very young officer about nineteen came to our battery as a reinforcement. He was sent on an important job and carried it off so well that he established a reputation for coolness and courage. He went off somewhere for a course of instruction on signalling, and after two weeks returned. He accompanied me down to the trenches. We were shelled on the way, not an unusual experience, and to my astonishment that boy seemed very worried. His nervous feeling was easily communicated to me and we started to walk very fast, and finally ran all the way down to the trenches like a couple of idiots. There is never any point in running behind the lines at the front when you are out of sight of the enemy and merely fear a chance shell. The next day I was in hospital, and a few days afterwards this same officer came into the

ward. I took him to be a visitor, but he told me he was a patient.

He had been to Brighton with a very pretty little English girl quite as I have described.

We commenced the journey to the base and it was pretty horrible for that fellow when the nurses asked for his disease. I was glad when he left us at Boulogne and went to the specific hospital where male nurses could look after him. Now, you will understand why he was in that nervous condition at Loos. That sort of thing takes all the manliness out of a fellow.

He told me all about it. He had lived in Canada. The temptation there had not been great. The loneliness of London had done it.

It is no good my warning you about the professional woman of a certain class. She is less dangerous. They exist in America and you know about them and have decided upon your line of action. It

may be possible, though difficult, for you to have a really good time with a girl you may meet promiscuously, but look out—she is more clever than you. London has become pretty terrible.

At the front while you are in reserve permission will be given you to visit the surrounding towns. In these there are estaminets or inns where light beer and coffee is sold. The danger here is less subtle, but if you are enticed into the back room keep well away from the half-clothed, filthy hag that may lurk there. She is terrible and dangerous, though not a siren by any means.

I have given you some straight tips, try and take them. You are the father of future Americans. Don't sew foul impulses in your race. Give your children a fair chance. We are pretty bad in Europe, you know. You would be the same with war at your doors for three years. Your race is made up of our very

best. Don't give us the fearful responsibility of ruining you and your nation. Forgive this preaching!

Remember that when a man goes to fight the old savage impulses come up in his mind. In a way he is fighting for his women. Don't think too hardly about this thing, and don't blame us too much. You are not a baby but a man, and it is up to you to look after yourself; in any case you are warned. Most men look with kindly eyes upon impurity—a young man must sow his wild oats and all that sort of thing. I guess you will have to think the matter out for yourself.

If your government could send over or establish in England or France a bureau of decent women, not old and not too "good," who would arrange to introduce you to decent girls who were not necessarily members of the Y.W.C.A., it might be a good idea. The trouble is that the



average man suspects the society formed for his good. It often is a bit dull.

It is very easy for me to advise you, it is very difficult, perhaps, for you to follow the advice. Possibly you will not want to.

I am really writing to the men who want to return to their wives and sweet-hearts unharmed by war. Perhaps it sounds sentimental. We used to call talk like this "pi jaw" at Cambridge, and only expected to get it from our chaplains and tutors whom we may have suspected of infirmities of their own. Still, it is good advice and worth taking, so I put it to you. You Americans are fighting the Germans not for your existence, perhaps, as are we, but possibly for a higher purpose. They have outraged your sense of decency, of manliness. You may march to Berlin; you may die fighting for your country; you may become a general and the hero of your nation, but if you have introduced to your children foul impulses

and impurity you are a beaten man. The world seems to have been designed for man. The flowers do their best to reproduce their loveliness on the earth, yet somehow or other we don't bother. Perhaps the war in which you are fighting is going to be the great school master. If so, all its fearful sacrifices will be worth while then.

## CHAPTER XII

### RATS, PETS, AND OTHERS

You will find that you are not the only kind of animal that occupies the trenches, although you are possibly the only uncomfortable one. There are thousands and thousands of rats, that differ from your charming small stable rats who disappear at your approach. They are as big as cats and almost as tame. It is safe to say that for every four yards of trench you walk along, you will see at night time at least two rats, and they are in no hurry to get away; in a heavy sort of manner they scuttle among the sandbags, but that is all. It would require a bold kind of fox terrier to attack them. One shudders to think what they live on. Perhaps as scavengers they have some use. In the trenches during an intensive bombardment when the

parapet and dugouts are getting knocked about they make quite a big din with their squeaking.

At one time men used to keep dogs in the trenches, but it was discovered that the Germans were using dogs to carry dispatches and so it was forbidden to keep them. This was very unfortunate for the soldiers, as, as a class, they are notoriously fond of dogs. An officer may have a perfectly good animal devoted to him, but once he takes him to barracks he soon shows a fickleness that is most regrettable. Dogs seem to love soldiers. Possibly, it is because where there is a crowd of men feeding there is also a good deal of waste. Besides, they have the habit of appreciating manliness, and there is no more manly creature alive than a good soldier.

I must tell you about Henri d'Armentieres. Henri's father was a Brussels Griffin who belonged to some officer. The Brussels Griffin was killed one day by a

German shell. It would be impossible to imagine the ancestry of Henri's mother, by name Finette. However, she was a charming little fat dog who lived in a small estaminet about a mile and a half from the front line trenches. Henri had about seven brothers and sisters, none of whom were alike: there were pups with woolly hair and pups with short hair. I happened to be passing the estaminet one day when they were all playing in the yard with their mother. I fell very much in love with a little woolly-haired one, and asked Madame if she would let me have him when he was a little older. She agreed. A few weeks after, I went to the estaminet and asked for the pup, proffering at the same minute about \$1.25. Madame at once searched in her pocket for change. She evidently did not value the pup very highly. However, I wished her to keep the five francs. Henri proved to be of much more value to me than many



#### PETS

They humanize the front, so you had better try to have one





hundreds of francs. He went with me everywhere; to the observation post, to the trenches, on long marches, and always slept in a small cracker box beside me. Most of his day was spent in the pocket of my tunic. Often on horseback he was there. He was very well known at that part of the front. He was too small to wander about very much by himself, so it was difficult for my men to win his love. However, Henri had a passion for a cat which belonged to one of my gun puts, and some days I would allow him to spend the day with the cat and they would have a glorious time together, rolling about perfectly happy. I remember once taking this kitten up to my dugout to spend half a day with Henri. They both rolled and played about for nearly an hour, and then getting tired they decided to sleep. As I sat writing at my table I watched them. Henri, of course, got into his cracker box which was made comfortable by a cholera

belt knitted by a loving relation, and a scarf knitted by another. The kitten had nowhere to sleep, but she promptly made herself comfortable on top of Henri and drowsed off. Henri feeling himself to be getting suffocated stirred gently and gradually worked his way until he was on top. Then the kitten, feeling herself to be too hot, worked her way until she got on top, and so this circular movement went on for nearly an hour.

It is a great help at the front to have some sort of pet, something to keep you from being too lonely at nights. Some soldiers, of course, are mounted and have their horse to look after, upon whom they always lavish quite a lot of affection.

I must tell you another story about dogs at the front. When it was discovered that the Germans were then using dogs to carry messages between the trenches—exactly to where these messages were sent I

am unable to state, but possibly there were spies living behind the lines—the thing had to be met, so an order was sent around to all officers commanding, asking them if they had any men with a knowledge of French who understood dogs. The dispatch certainly looked a little bit comical. In my brigade there was a rather eccentric officer on duty at headquarters when this dispatch arrived. He replied that they had no men who understood French, but they had a cat who could speak Persian. I dare not tell you the reply that came from divisional headquarters. However, it is still possible for men in the Artillery and other arms of the service who don't actually occupy front-line trenches to keep dogs, cats, and other pets.

You will sometimes see a battery going along the road with, at every section of the column, a certain number of dogs who stick to their own part of the column, ignoring everything and everybody that

they meet on the way. You will see how attentive the men are to them, picking them up and carrying them on the caissons when they show signs of fatigue. You will be possibly astonished when you see a battery going from one position to another: in trench warfare one spends quite a long time in the same position, and consequently a good deal of material is collected. There may be tables, sometimes chairs and lots of little things that add to the comfort of the men are gathered together, and, whenever possible, the officers try to carry these extras. The result is that they endeavor to pick up as many old wagons as possible, and, having got the mechanic on the wheeler of the battery to repair them, they go along quite nicely. At any rate, they are very useful. You see, just behind the trenches there are crowds and crowds of farm houses. Sometimes the shed where the wagons are kept is on the side of the farm away from the



HER RUINED HOME AS LEFT BY THE ENEMY  
It is difficult for this poor French woman to understand





enemy. The result is that often a wagon escapes injury. But even if the wheel is smashed to bits, it is not difficult to replace. This is really harmless looting, because sooner or later the whole farm, including the wagons, will be demolished.

I remember once seeing a family brougham going along behind a battery, all the windows smashed and part of the hood knocked in, and a soldier sitting on the box driving a light artillery horse in the shafts. The inside was crammed with all sorts of strange things. A battery on the march at the front does not look very dignified—even the dogs have a rakish appearance.

Although at home, a dog is the very best sort of pet to have, in the army he gets a bit spoilt. It seems that he has generally too many masters, and as they all feed him and all make a fuss over him, he grows to regard all soldiers, especially privates, as his lords and masters. He



seems to follow anyone, almost. Of course, there are exceptions, but the general kind of dog does not appear to mind what battery or what company he follows. When you get him young, perhaps it is different. Of course, in barracks, he will be faithful to the men living in the barracks, but anything in khaki seems to attract him.

Goats make very good pets, especially billy goats. Nannys are fickle. We had a fine billy goat in my battery. We got him one day out on a route march, as a gift from the widow of an old sergeant major. He had to be fed with a bottle, and soon grew attached to all the men in the battery. They never seemed to appreciate him as much as one would have liked, and unfortunately the men in the next battery ("A" Battery, it was called), took a violent fancy to him, and Billy used to spend a lot of his time with them. He always, however, came home. He developed a

few rather poor tricks, but still he was a very good sort of goat, and we rather liked him. Perhaps he was a little too fond of officers. The night we left England I told one of my sergeants not to forget Billy. I went in a different transport from the others, and when we arrived in France I asked for Billy. They had forgotten him. I met the colonel during the day and he told me that he had seen Billy roaming about before he had left, and had ordered "A" battery to bring him on. This was a little unfortunate, because I feared "A" battery would claim him; still, it was good to know that the colonel had ordered them to bring him. When we finally came across "A" battery, sure enough, Billy was with them. They begged me not to take him away, pointing out rightly enough that my men could not have appreciated him very much if they could forget him. As a matter of fact, the wet canteen had

been visited rather too often by my gunners that last night. I admitted sadly that they spoke truly, but I wanted that goat. I got him all right, but he was always disappearing and was always found with "A" battery.

Finally, it was stated that "A" battery was leaving for Salonica, so I decided to watch Billy. The night before they left, I went along to say good-bye to the officers I knew among them, and incidentally to find Billy who was missing. They swore that he was not there. I asked leave to search for him. This was refused at first, but after threats and bribes, they allowed me to search, the men meanwhile looking comically annoyed. Finally, I found him behind a great heap of straw in the barn, and a soldier also hidden with him keeping him from jumping about. I almost said, "Take the blooming goat," but I rather loved him. There was almost a mild mutiny over it, and my two men

had some unpleasant things said to them as they carried Billy out of the farm yard. I got him home and told the sentries to guard him well through the night. Do you know, those men of Battery "A" broke through the sentries and carried Billy off. In the morning when I heard of it I rushed along on a bicycle to their position, but they had gone. Billy is probably now in Monastir and I must say that the men of Battery "A" deserved to have him.

The next day, when taking the battery out for a route march, we were in reserve, I saw a charming young goat grazing on the side of a big ditch. The woman refused to sell him until tempted with ten francs, exactly five times his value, and we took the goat home. Unfortunately, she was a Nanny, and the men promptly called her Gertie. For a time she was a success, but she developed a love for plum and apple jam. The men don't seem to en-

joy jam as much as they might and never take all the jam from a can, hence, Gertie was always getting her nose stuck in jam tins. In any case her nose always looked unpleasant and jammy. She lived with the horses at the wagon line mostly, but one day we brought her up to the battery position. It was two days before a battle, and Gertie spent the night in the kitchen of an old farmhouse unoccupied and in ruins. Unfortunately the major had stored his dispatches for the battle in this room and there were also a number of newspapers lying about. Gertie had finished eating the newspapers and was just starting to eat the secret dispatches when I found her. The major looked as though he would have grown hysterical if she had eaten them. She was promptly sent back to the wagon line. She was fickle—very. First she went off with the Durham light infantry and was rescued, then she eloped with the Dublin fusiliers, and that is all

I know about her. Gertie was not a success.

Cats are not bad things to have in gun positions. Unfortunately they are like the world, they laugh with you but refuse definitely to do any weeping. We had a cat in Number Four gun pit. It was the one I used to borrow to amuse Henri d'Armentieres. She was most faithful to Number Four gun pit in spite of the efforts of Number One to win her affection. When the winter came on Number Four got a bit damp and that cat, she was only a kitten, too, developed a love for Number Three which was dry. Number Three got damp and Number Two also leaked, and finally she arrived at Number One. Here she had many admirers and was very well fed. She refused to recognize any of her old friends. Finally, all the gun pits were a bit damp, and that cat went off to live with the lady in the farmhouse. I lost faith in her when she left Number

Four, because the men had so arranged things for her that she could not get wet; there was not very much water. She could have spent an interesting time floating on the floor boards.

Hence don't expect a cat to be a faithful pet when you get to the front.

When we were ordered to go to Ypres, the most unpleasant part of the line, I felt that it was time for Henri to go to England. I got leave at this time and arrived at Dover with Henri stuffed inside my pocket on account of the customs' people.

I also hid him when registering at the Hotel Cecil, and fortunately the floor housekeeper, a beautiful woman of thirty-five in black silk, fell head over heels in love with him, and he spent many happy days there while I was enjoying myself in London. He was only about ten inches long and looked like a miniature collie: nothing like a pom. Finally, I took him home to the country. Now Henri had



missed something—what, he could not understand. He did not seem quite happy. Incidentally I had put aside my uniform when in London, so Henri was meeting only civilians. I was sitting in the railway coach when we stopped at a small station and a large Artillery sergeant major got into the carriage. Henri gave one leap across the coach and into his lap, and looking across apologetically at me curled up and went to sleep. It was the khaki, of course, and the scent of a soldier. Finally, I got home and my other dogs looked askance at the funny little stranger, but he rushed at them in such a friendly way that they had to succumb at once to his charms. A badly bred, but gentle-minded rabbit hunter of a fox terrier of mine, fell badly in love with him and as Henri attacked him with mock fury he would roll over and pretend to be quite beaten and finished up.

He slept in the biscuit box at my bed

that night, as he had always done at the front, and I feared what would happen in the morning, for Jimmy, the badly-bred fox terrier, called by a lewd fellow at Cambridge a "sea otter," always arrived with the servant in the morning to spend at least half an hour sleeping soundly at my feet while I mustered up courage to get up and face the day. Jimmy had always done this before the war, and any other dogs approaching got half killed. To Jimmy's surprise he found Henri in his biscuit box beside the bed. He looked furious; but Henri yawned, opened his eyes, looked pleased, made one rush at Jimmy, and Jimmy just had to give in. Finally, they both rolled up and went to sleep.

Jaggers, another mongrel now approached, thinking that sleeping at the foot of the bed had become a privilege for all dogs got an awful bite on the leg for his pains and went yelping off. The

next day I had to leave Henri and return to Ypres. My room was cleaned and left for my next "leave," if any. During the day Henri was missed and a search was made for him. He could not be found for several hours, and then a maid going into my room found him whimpering on the bed. Poor, wee fellow, he loved soldiers and found it impossible to live away from them. He got ill, and in spite of all the dog doctors in London, he died.

I am afraid that we are a bit cracked in regard to dogs at our house, but everybody loved Henri, witnessed by the fact that whenever we were in reserve and had to move about, the children at the farm used to weep when "Le Tres beau petit chien" went off.

If you are in the Infantry you will certainly have a large Billy goat, massively clothed in woolly hair, wearing a big brass collar; but I guess he will only be for

show and far too conceited to think much of.

Incidentally, although "No Man's Land" is such an unpleasant place, I have heard partridges calling at night there.

One would think that dogs would be useful to keep the rats down in the trenches, but I am not sure but that the dogs would have a pretty difficult time of it. In any case, they are forbidden. Police dogs alone are allowed to remain with soldiers, and my Henri was registered as a police dog.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE FOLKS AT HOME

Just before boarding the transport you may be told that from then on there will be no more need for postage stamps. This will entice you to send home postcards and letters. It can be taken as a certainty that you will put at the top—"On active service." It will be your first thrill. It will also be a little exciting for those at home. They will think that it augurs well for your future attendance to correspondence. I wonder if you will attend to this thing. Writing home, I mean. Of course, you'll continue writing to the young lady, but your mother. What about her? The young lady will be glad, of course, to get your letters, but if you don't write she will have much to console her. There are lots of soldiers about! But if you forget your

mother, she'll have nothing to help her to bear a fearful lot of pain.

You know, during your absence, she'll spend all the time worrying. She has always loved you, but her love has increased since you became a soldier. It always does. Of course, her ideas of warfare may be largely made up of pictures of the Battle of Gettysburg; she will see you every night with a bandage around your head, or lying wounded and thirsty on the battlefield.

The very ordinaryness of warfare will prevent your realizing this. Then your father. He's got, in spite of his prosperous and cheery exterior, just the same amount of love. He has never been able to express it. The full expression of affection by a plain man has become impossible these days. Consequently, he is going to worry even more.

Try and think of those at home. I know at times you'll be having a perfectly hor-

rible time. Of course, you will; but at home they will be having even worse. You have something to do; something to occupy your thoughts: they have nothing, except to worry. Now if you can get a letter off as often as possible, it is going to help an awful lot. Put in something for the mother and something for the father each time. She'll want to hear about your food; about the socks she sent you; whether you wear the cholera belt. You may use the cholera belt as a knee pad, the trench helmet, for cleaning your rifle, but don't tell her that. I remember in the winter, once seeing a Highland soldier with a cholera belt around each knee. They are nice and elastic. As a matter of fact, during the winter, you'll appreciate anything woolly. It is difficult, however, to carry much. Things get lost or pinched. Tell her about the little things, about your food, about Madame, and how the French woman in back billets washes your things. To the



father imaginary thrills ought to be the line. Write to him as you think warfare ought to be. Try and hide from him the fact that it is like playing in a game of football in which there is no referee and the other side can't be trusted.

Your letters will all be censored, so attend to the things that ought not be written. A growling letter never gets through. Do not fear to write openly and honestly. Your officer censors them, but as he has from 20 to 30 letters to read every night, he never thinks of you as a person—merely as a confounded nuisance for writing so much. He'd be relieved to escape the job.

You will find that even during a battle, if it is not a very big one, the mail arrives every day; also a few newspapers.

Sometimes you have private things to write about. This need is met by the supply of special envelopes which go to the base to be censored. All the letters would go to the base, but to do it quickly, there

would have to be an enormous staff. As it is, an officer gets sent into his billet about 20 or 30 letters. They are left open. He glances at the beginning and the signature. He has then a pretty good idea what sort of a letter it is. It is not very often that one has to stop a letter. It is forbidden to make complaints usually, and you will admit that this is right. Perhaps rations have not arrived in time, and Private Smith, feeling a bit tired and hungry, writes off to Mr. Smith, who is a senator. Senator Smith will talk of it in the Senate.

Yes, you will often feel furious with the powers that be, but, an army is an autocracy, you're a soldier, and you have just got to put up with it.

Criticism of superior officers, although an interesting occupation and one practiced by many, is a sure way of causing your letter never to reach its destination. They'll object to your talking about forthcoming battles. They object to the nam-

ing of places. People still persist in putting dots under letters in the ordinary letter home, spelling out the names of towns and villages.

I've seldom read a letter written by my men describing warfare that has been accurate. Possibly the men know the minds of the folk to whom they are writing, but at times they have included their officers in wonderful stunts. This is pleasing, but the officer thanks God for its untruth.

If possible, make a point of writing one letter a week to your home, and remember that each week forgotten will cause extra pain. Women have such wonderful imaginations, and until you return, your family will have decided at least a hundred times to buy mourning.

Find out, if possible, what arrangements are made in the event of casualties, whether a cable is sent, or what happens. Then let the family know accurately and clearly what will happen in the way of

communicating the fact of your being killed or wounded. Then assure them, that until this communication reaches them you are absolutely safe. Rub this fact in, about ten times; even if you've got to write it in block capitals. It might be a good idea for some printer to sell cards giving this information. Families could place in on the chimney piece.

It is also a kindness when writing home, to mention the fact of your seeing fellows whose families live in the same section as yours.

It is a bad thing to say in a letter that you have heard that Tom Jones is wounded or killed. He may be neither, but your family with tact and care will invariably communicate the sad news. The family of Tom Jones will suffer much, and possibly buy mourning. They will be recovering from the first shock when a letter will arrive from Tom. They won't look at the date, but will get slightly comforted.

Frankly, I think they'll get all muddled up for weeks; then finally if he does die, they'll get a double dose.

The battlefield is a place of lies. Rumors, rumors, always rumors! How often Lille has been captured! How often the British have landed at Ostend!

## CHAPTER XIV

### SOME REFLECTIONS, SENTIMENTAL AND OTHERWISE

To most people war seems a useless sort of thing, and it is indeed difficult to understand the logic of banding together and arming for the purpose of killing those with whom under different circumstances one might be on friendly, personal terms. If you think this now, when you get to the front you will think it even more, as you will notice that among the soldiers there is very little commonplace hatred shown. At times you won't be able to hate the Germans at all. As something hidden, they will be of vast interest to you. It may be months before you see a single individual. You may spend days, even weeks, quite close to where they are, but on both sides to be seen is to be dead. Of

course, you may see many scores of German prisoners and sometimes the killed, but a real live one going about perfectly free is a scarce bird. Officers at the front speak quite kindly about the Bosche, and sometimes the young officers express the wish to have them over to dinner to hear of their experiences.

There are, however, some men who have seen the work of the Hun at his worst. There is the fearful story always told at the front of the crucified Canadian. Some officers have been too easy with German prisoners, have trusted them and have seen these same prisoners, at a favorable opportunity, turn round and kill their men. Those men who have been imposed upon have now a great and bitter hatred, but the actual Germans in the trenches opposite will not inspire you with many angry feelings. You know, if people did not get killed and wounded in warfare it would be a very interesting game. The out-door



life, in spite of the cold, is very healthful, and officers who have suffered at home from lumbago and sometimes rheumatism have found their diseases disappear at the front. You know as well as do I the delight of being with a crowd of fellows. One makes friends very quickly, and at the front there are often many happy days spent.

You may be a sniper, a very good shot, and will be on duty at a certain point with a periscopic rifle. (Incidentally make use of the periscope and don't stick your head up. You may do it for weeks and even establish a reputation for great luck, but you will be stung sooner or later, also others will copy you and may not be so lucky. As a dead man you are quite useless to your country. As a wounded man, who has been wounded through not taking the right precautions, you are merely a nuisance.) When on sniping duty you will not regard the fellow you

are after as a living human being with a wife and children at home anxious for news of him. You are spared that. You will merely regard the German as a target. Generally if you get him, it is owing to his own carelessness in doing what you may be doing—showing himself. Some officers are often careless—especially in the Infantry. They have been in those same trenches at times for months, and having never been killed have grown careless. One can't blame them. The thing has become so familiar.

Quite often if you have time to think of anything besides the fact that you have a working party that night; that the bully-beef is hard and tough; that it will probably rain any moment, and the trench will be all mud in a few hours; that the piece of parapet you helped to mend has been knocked down by a trench mortar shell, you may wonder why men fight at all. Millions have been wondering the same

thing, so you are not the first. Some people say vaguely that this war is a commercial war. Precisely what they mean it is difficult to see. Others blame England for the whole trouble. Many millions blame the Kaiser. One often hears after there has been an extra piece of "frightfulness," the remark, "I don't know how that Kaiser can sleep at nights." He must sometimes get insomnia.

Perhaps the real reason why this war and many others have come upon us is that hate and its attendants, jealousy, envy, suspicion, has got the better of love with its attendants, manliness, trust, charity, decency, purity, and all the things that prevent men from being worse than animals. "By ambition fell the angels," said Shakespeare. Neither England nor America were particularly ambitious. They had all that they wanted—plenty of land awaiting development. An American found himself possessed of a wonderful

large country and was contented; a Briton found the British flag flying all over the world. A German travelled and found himself always or nearly always under a foreign flag. He thought how much better it would be to have the world under the influence of his own Kultur. It worried him and irritated him. The Kaiser thought of his own, and his own peoples' greatness, their efficiency, and he wanted a place in the sun. He thought of his own family's years of successes. It was not enough for Germany to have equal privileges with Great Britain in trade. The German merchant marine by its efficiency, fine ships, was catching up and would doubtlessly have passed that of Great Britain. Some people in the British Dominions preferred to travel in German ships. They were cheaper and in some ways rather nicer. This was not enough. The German autocracy saw the chance of being a world Empire. The desire for

power was too great. Ambition crept in and Germany fell.

She has fallen very low. Even we, possessed of quite a number of faults, cannot afford to do anything else but hate her; but remember that part of the responsibility for war rests on our shoulders as part of the human race. We have got away from our old ideals, all of us, and not Germany alone. People are very fond of saying that Great Britain is fighting for her existence, and for nothing else. They are always saying it. They don't give us a chance for higher impulses. But perhaps there are some British people who think differently, perhaps the great majority do. Perhaps many of them are fighting because Germany in their eyes has proved herself to be rotten at the core. She has been very unsportsman-like. Her organized use of gas in battle is enough to make most men glad to take up the sword and go at her—you will be sure of

it after you have seen a man die of gas poisoning. Don't trust the enemy an inch, but remember that when you feel like paying him back in his own coin that you are an American, not a Hun. The greatest victory you can ever win is the victory over hatred—generous treatment to a fallen foe, but don't be a fool with them—take no chances. They can be unbelievably dirty in their methods.

During trench warfare a prisoner, either dead or alive, is particularly valuable, as his hat badge, buttons, and papers will prove useful in determining how the enemy's troops are stationed.

One day one of the men in the trenches over which we were shooting was wounded in a patrol skirmish. He got lost and could not be found before dawn. He had evidently fainted. When daylight arrived he must have revived, and was discovered just outside the trench about twenty yards. In decent warfare the Red Cross people

could have gone out and got him. Not so when fighting the Bosche. The wounded man commenced to make a terrible noise, and the men in the trench all volunteered to bring him in. The officers wisely forbade this as it would be certain death, and there was no point in sacrificing four men to save one. It was terrible and the men were very much worried. All day the groans and yells could be heard. Finally, at dusk the officer went out with four men to get him in. Perhaps it was too early, at any rate, two of the men were killed and the other two got in all right with the wounded man, but he died the moment he was brought into the trench. It was a good bit of work for the Germans. They, of course, all day had had a machine gun fixed, and as soon as they suspected a rescue they rained bullets into him. They were evidently pleased with the work they had done, for the next day a Tommy lying on the outside of the wire was seen to



be moving his arm every minute. The trenches were about two hundred yards apart, and he could be plainly seen. It was decided to attempt to get him in that night. Towards the afternoon the colonel came down with a very good telescope, and fixing it between two sandbags loose at the top of the parapet had a good look. Fortunately, he was able to see that the man was dead. He wondered at the movement. On looking closer he discovered a string fixed to the Tommy's wrist which was being pulled occasionally. Pretty clever, eh? So the Germans have learned to make use of the manly impulses of their enemy.

When you hear the "Kamerad pardon" stuff, it doesn't mean that they have always finished with you. Keep them covered. Don't let those hands come down till you are sure that they are unarmed. When sure that they are harmless, then your chance comes to be generous, and

you will be. Our Tommies generally are. One sees German prisoners looking happy, smoking cigarettes given to them by their captors. German prisoners arrive at their camps in England with boxes, large boxes of cigarettes given them by English people on the journey. Of course, they may have sold their helmets or their buttons for them. I wonder if they will show you much kindness if you are a prisoner. They hate the British most at present—the day will come when they may hate you more. The German soldier lacks a sense of humor, you know.

America, according to the remarks of President Wilson, is entering this war in defense of her honor to keep democracy alive. You haven't the slightest interest in democracy. You leave politics to your senators and representatives. However, you do know that the reason you are entering this war is mixed up with the dirty tricks of the Germans. You are conscious

of the fact that you are not as dirty as the Bosche, and you are going to teach him a lesson.

A long, long time ago a Man was born into this world who spent the whole time of his existence fighting a similar battle to yours. He found the world full of prejudice, wars, and rumors of wars. Religion which ought to have been the saviour of the people had become the home of intolerance and vice, sometimes cruelty and ambition. The home of civilization was corrupt and foul. Men had sunk lower than animals. Still, He fought the battle and in the effort he died, and although he died, he left one big thing behind him—love. It looked for centuries as though this thing that he had left behind was going to conquer hate. He established a club and gave it the gift of love as its greatest weapon. The club used it with wonderful results. Success ruined it. Hate, although beaten at first, sought a

subtle method. It clothed itself in the garments of love and entered the society where it was welcomed. It has not yet beaten love altogether, but it seems at times very near victory. This war proves that it has been very, very successful. When this club realizes the position and is able to detect the canker that is sapping its life, love may have another chance. The world may be freed from war.

Although you are not going definitely to fight for love, you are fighting that the poor people of the world may live in safety. You are going to fight against unwise ambition which is the big disciple of hate. You are, therefore, more on the side of love than on the other side. Therefore, the Soldier who died fighting—as you may die—is willing to help you. It is not suggested that you should become unpleasantly religious. During your service you'll meet men with whom you'd enjoy hell, but while fighting the Germans remember

that you are fighting for the right side. You'll have many troubles, and the mother at home will be praying for you. It would be a good idea to pray a bit for yourself. No one will laugh at you. It gets very boring to read of heroes in books saying their prayers, and other folk laughing at them. You are not of sufficient interest for the others to laugh at. You may want to say your prayers for the wife and kiddies at home, but do not do it because you are afraid the others will laugh. They won't!

I might advise you to take a bible with you and read it. Your mother will give you one. You have all read of bibles stopping bullets as all that sort of thing pleases certain people, and the clergy are able to make use of such instances in their sermons. But there is a little that is romantic about it, for a bullet is a funny thing, and can be affected in strange ways. When one stops to think, I suppose it is not so strange—it is no more strange than a

huge sailing ship or liner being affected by the comparatively small rudder at the stern. A bullet will take the way of least resistance; when it knocks against anything hard or tough, it will not merely stop, but will tend to go aside, and therefore a bible in a man's breast pocket will tend to turn it aside and make it continue in a circle away from the man's body—but it might easily hurt the next fellow!

It always seems wrong to suggest the interference of God in warfare. God gave the world love, the greatest miracle there is, and we have just thrown it aside; and we have jolly well got to take what comes and take it like men if we can. A man carrying love in his mental knapsack has a greater protection against that death which is more horrible than the actual killing of his body than the fellow with a bible in his breast pocket. When I say love, I don't mean that sloppy sort of feeling sometimes displayed by a fond

aunt for a futile nephew. I don't mean that a fellow should endeavor to emanate sunshine from himself and exhaust his comrades—the Polly Anna business. What I mean is that a fellow should strive to be a perfect man. Manliness these days suggests at once a fellow who is good at base ball or football, or who can use his fists well. Certainly these are a great help. But there are fellows going about who are the most perfect athletes, lauded and admired by their friends, but who have about as much soul and brain as a good-looking bull. They are not men really. They are just nice animals.

Of course, we all admire and look up to the aristocracy of beef; there is something to it, but remember that you have got a soul and you have got a brain. They are more important than your body. They make you different from the animals, and if you neglect them altogether you will do little for the world. You may have a good



time while you are young, but when you get older there will be little really to you. So the ideal man and the ideal soldier is the man who refuses to neglect any part of himself. An unclean Christian is a revolting kind of person; a foul-mouthed, foul-minded athlete is much worse. If you can make the Christian clean physically and the athlete clean mentally and spiritually you perhaps strike the ideal man.

At the front you may see very few men reading their bibles, or indeed, saying their prayers, although some do. This does not mean that the spirit of love is entirely absent. It struggles very hard to be seen and heard, and often succeeds. You will have many religious arguments. Most men argue about religion—it is a diverting topic. When in such an argument you'll probably remember the things you were taught at Sunday school as you sat there in the heat listening to the lady telling

you about the things of the Spirit, while you were only conscious of a fleshy desire to get out among the cool trees. As the other fellows may have similar data the argument will be a fair one and will lead to nothing.

You will do better by reading the bible. If you do read it, read the New Testament, and study the life of Jesus. He was a very perfect man, you know. There is nothing in his life that you can criticize. If you do this, it will prevent war from killing your soul. It does this very often to men. It is better to die with your soul than to live without it. War is the eldest son of hate. You have got to fight for all that you hold dear. It would be useless to kneel down in the trenches and pray to God to kill all the Germans. If we were all perfect and free from guilt ourselves, one could imagine it being possible. So develop the impulses of decency towards your friends. Remember that to get hell

from your officers is not a manly sort of martyrdom, although your friends will sympathize. If you are doing some work do it as decently as possible. You needn't over-do it. There are, however, occasions when a man has to work so hard at night that in the morning he can hardly stand. If you are sent out on duty alone, try and not seize this chance to loaf. You seldom will have to work fearfully hard. Most hard work at the front is for your own protection. If you loaf on this and let the other fellow do it you are merely a rotter.

Sometimes after a long weary march arriving near the enemy at about eight o'clock P.M., you will be ordered to dig in. Your impulse will be to lie down and sleep for a hundred years. But the morning must not find you exposed, so you have just got to get down to it. Then you will be able to size up your comrades, only don't be too hard in your judgments. Some men can't stand as much as others. Still,

many in the dark do very little, and someone has got to do it. It is then that the spiritual side of a man must help. The body sleepy and tired wants to take control. The spirit of fairness to your friends, fairness to your officers, will commence a fight. Sometimes the spirit will be beaten.

You may have worked hard all your life; you may have done more work in your life than you will ever do in the army, but on some occasions at the front even for the strongest man it is pretty terrible. You see that in everything at the front a man has to decide to follow the highest part of his nature. In civilian life a man seeks advancement. There is no chance for the slacker. A man's desire to get on, to feed his wife and his children, and to make himself a name in the world (if he cannot bluff), sometimes keeps him from being a slacker. In the army it is different. Of course, some men seek to rise

from the ranks, but in times of stress there seems little room for ambition. There is nothing to urge a man onwards but his sense of duty. You see, there are boundless opportunities for slacking at night. Often no one can talk above a whisper; the N.C.O.'s can't see, and the officer is working just as hard as you are. I hope you understand what I am getting at. It is a little difficult to explain. What I mean, in a few words, is that the man who on every occasion tries to do his very best, who is fairly decent to his friends, not merely an amusing companion, who thinks out things and tries to see the object of orders and works hard even if he does not understand them, who shows mercy to a fallen foe, even if that foe is a soldier of the Kaiser, and better still, who shows mercy to his friends, is doing more than carrying a bible. Try not to let warfare ruin you. You won't be able to come out entirely unscathed; but try.

What is a bible to you—a few thousand pages of printed matter bound in a leather cover. Why should it give you protection. Why should it protect your breast from receiving a bullet any more than the man who carried his bible in his knapsack. And yet there is that in the bible, if one can only get it, that will make you safe from all the “whizz bangs,” all the “crumps,” and “Jack Johnstons,” all the bullets in the world. It is something that will make you live longer than the man who dies in his bed at the age of eighty. It is the spirit of love, the spirit of Jesus, the perfect man. The soldier who fought a losing battle and yet won. If you are a decent soldier you will be fighting with Him, only you won’t know it, perhaps, and if it is your luck to die with Him beside you, it will be a fine thing. I guess this seems a bit religious. I got it from my chaplain at Cambridge; he looked as if he knew. One has tried and one has failed.

However, I put it to you. There is a picture, sentimental, perhaps, but effective, of a soldier dying with his head leaning against one of the large crucifixes, so common in France. He has a Red Cross arm-let, if I remember. The face of the figure on the cross is looking down with sorrow and sympathy. The whole thing is a little terrible when one thinks about it. Do you know the whole of the present battle-field is full of crucifixes? All the farms have their shrines. Every house has somewhere or other about it the picture of The Cross. It is a terrible reminder of the battle raging between love and hate. The Man on the cross came into the world bearing love to all. Hate killed him. He brought the antidote for war, we spurned it; all of us, not Germany alone. And now the greatest war between love and hate is raging.

I don't mean to suggest that we represent love, and the others represent hate,



but in warfare the battle going on between these two goes on in a man's mind whether he is a German or an American. The odds are on the side of hate, so look out. The only thing is to be the perfect soldier. Do your duty by your country, by your comrades, by your officers, and by the enemy, but don't be a fool in regard to the last named. You know the Germans as individuals cannot all be bad. Their officers have chosen hate as an effective weapon. We have laughed at their "Got strafe England," but remember, when a doctor is fighting disease he must take precautions to avoid infection.

I'd like to write a lot about reading your bible every night and all that sort of thing, but I did it but seldom myself, so cannot say a word. What I can say is that the best kind of soldier is the fellow who does his duty by his comrades, not by bringing in a wounded one in a melodramatic way, but by using his brains as well

as his muscles to think out where he can go wrong, and by avoiding crimes that affect the happiness and comfort of his comrades. I never saw a great deal of the chaplain. Some of us are very lazy, and except when marching my men to church parade, I seldom went to church. It was a little difficult. When a fellow is lucky enough not to be on duty at the observation post on Sunday, it is rather nice to slack about. In the Artillery during the winter Sunday is as much as possible a day of rest. However, it was nice to get to church sometimes.

I remember once, however, when we were in reserve, the chaplain asking me to prepare for a celebration of the Holy Communion. It was to be at about six in the evening. I borrowed an old melodeon from the parish priest, and lugged it along to the battery mechanic who mended it and stopped it from wheezing as much as possible. I then got a table

from Madame. She being a good Roman catholic, offered me candle sticks and a crucifix. The chaplain was a very low churchman, so I knew he would not stand for the crucifix, and some people in England who are not very religious, as a rule hate a high church service. I knew the parson wanted everyone to be happy, so I told Madame as tactfully as possible, that as we were protestants, the crucifix would not be necessary. I asked her in bad French if she had a plain cross, and she promptly got a screw driver and removed the figure. It looked irreverent, but it wasn't. Marie Louise got some vases filled with flowers, and we soon had fixed up a pretty little altar. We had merely notified the men about the service and just a few came. The others were a little frightened. The service commenced. The organ wheezed out some Communion hymns, and soon a few more men stood in the offing. All present communicated, al-

though most of them had never done so before. They were there chiefly to please the officer who had asked them. It was a fine night. There was no religious fervor. I don't know if anyone was impressed. It was just a plain service, the greater part of the men present had never been to a Holy Communion service before. The sky behind the altar presented a mass of little flashes. They were the work of anti-aircraft guns. It was beautiful, really. You see, it was just getting dusk, and the sky was getting red and blue as the sun went down, and amidst the beauty of the sunset these little flashes looked pretty. I remember hoping that no one had got hurt that Sunday evening. Marie Louise, a friend, and her mother stood off looking at the mass of "*les soldats Brittanique*." In France the Protestants are not mixed up with the Catholics like they are in America and England. Hence there is little or no religious intolerance.

It is curious to see the French peasants going off to church. They all dress up a great deal, but chiefly are they careful about their foot wear. Monsieur's shoes are very bright and clean, Madame's are also clean, and Marie Louise has on all her finery. In places where they have to walk a good way in the mud they wear things that look like the stirrup of a saddle or the contrivance that a man wears on his foot if it is shorter than the other. They are made of iron and raise a person about six inches from the ground. The result is that the people arrive at church with clean shoes.

I went to the parish church one Sunday in France. The curé seems to take up a collection for himself. There was also another collection for the poor. There seemed to be three that day. I had no change, but put in a five franc bill when the curé came to me. He was a little astonished and thanked me. Madame at

the billet saw this and said that a person who gave five francs to the curé had more money than sense. I gave it really as an apologetic offering because I had met a small fox terrier outside who had decided that I must be his long-lost master, and during the service he got into the church, rushed about, disturbed the procession, and finally got on my back as I knelt there. It was useless to deny that the dog was mine, and the people were a little annoyed. They said the offering should not have been made to the curé, but to the poor.

And now I am going to close these notes. There is not much to them, I fear, but if they can help you a little we will be glad. They are just a jumble of ideas and thoughts, but they are mostly true.











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